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HERE TODAY, GONE TOMORROW
CONSUMER EXPERIENCES AT FASHION POP-UP SALES

by

ANNA SPITZKAT

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Supervisor   Christian Fuentes
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"Drake opened his first US [pop-up] store in LA after one in Toronto. If this guy is launching stores, it puts the whole world on a binary: You're either with Drake or you're against him. Don't bet against Drake."

Greg T. Spielberg, founder of the retail agency Imagination in Space and pop-up expert.

ABSTRACT

Within business practice, the concept of pop-up retailing has already grown out its status of just being a trend, and has developed into a highly accepted and widely used retail format in a variety of business sectors.

Despites this rising popularity, academic research has given rather little attention towards the phenomenon of temporary retail sites. Due to this research scarcity, the purpose of this thesis is to provide new insights for understanding contemporary consumption and retail space from a socio-cultural perspective. While focusing on pop-up sale events, this study explores a sub-category of pop-up retailing which has been mainly neglected within the current literature. In doing so, it aims to enhance our knowledge of how the temporary retail space as a whole, including the distinct characteristics of pop-up sales, shapes and influences consumer practices, and along with that, shoppers' in-store experiences.

This study is grounded on the alignment of existing literature in the field of socio-cultural retailing and the theoretical framework builds upon previous studies anchored in Consumer Culture Theory, discussing the multifaceted dynamics of consumer experiences and their relation to retail space.

Given the exploratory purpose, the study uses ethnographic methodologies that make it possible to understand the retail phenomenon as a whole, by allowing the researcher to immerse in the field, and to holistically experience and capture the events of the retail site. The empirical data collection for the present multi-side study is based on extensive in-store observations, supported by pictures of the retail settings and the actors in the field, informal chats directly at the retail site, and ethnographic consumer interviews.

The analysis provides dense portrayals of the retailscapes and presents pop-up sales as highly functional, modest and unstructured spaces that align elements of different alternative retail spaces. Further, the engaging qualities of these retail environments are found to enable practices and sentiments that have been already acknowledged in context of alternative space. Additionally the spacial conditions facilitate consumption experiences that researchers have found to be interconnected with outstanding, well planned and spectacular retail spaces. Thus, this thesis presents pop-up sales as hybrid spaces that merge alternative retail space and so-called retail spectacle. These spaces do not enable spectacular experiences despite their modest organization, but especially because of their distinct features. Finally, it is argued that pop-up sales as hybrid and instable retail spaces represent an example for 'liquid retail' and marketplace transformation, and reflect a development which is pointed out as a result of recent societal changes.

Key Words
Pop-Up Stores; Pop-Up Sales; Socio-Cultural Retailing; Consumer Culture Theory; Retail Space; Alternative Space; Retail Spectacle; Consumer Experiences

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1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter starts with an introduction to the research background and provides information about recent societal developments that have contributed to the establishment of pop-up retailing. Followed by this, the research problem is narrowed down, and the research gaps are addressed, before the aim of this thesis, and along with that two research questions are pointed out. After that, the theoretical, as well as the practical contributions of this study are illustrated, which both illuminate to the relevance of this thesis.

1.1 Background

The trend towards developing new store formats such as temporary retail sites, or so-called pop-up stores, is a result of recent changes within the retail sector (Surchi, 2011). As many other economic areas, also the retail industry underlies the ever-changing dynamics of cultural alterations, trends within consumer behavior, and changes in customer demands and purchasing habits (Cachinho, 2014). One of these recent, but still ongoing developments that influences the retail sector as a whole, is the market shift from an economy centering on goods and services, towards an experience economy (Pine & Gilmore, 1998; Schulze, 1992, Boswijk, Thijssen & Peelen, 2007). According to Pine & Gilmore (1998), consumers who belong to this 'new' experience society are characterized by the demand for memorable events and stimuli, which are given higher priority than simply owning and consuming goods. Rather, the experience itself comes to the fore and simultaneously becomes the product sold. Hence, shopping experiences either serve as supplementary components (Sundbo & Darmer, 2008), or may even fully substitute traditional goods and services (Pine & Gilmore, 1998).

In accordance with this, Pomodoro (2013) describes the postmodern consumer as always on the move, driven by the desire to live up to temporary, yet exciting experiences. These individuals are further marked by the urgent wish for immediate gratification, a strong emphasis on living euphoric moments and the postmodern ethos of 'carpe diem'. Hence, our contemporary culture and along with this, recently evolved lifestyles, are shaped by ephemeral experiences, transience and immediacy (Pomodoro, 2013).

In a similar vein, Bauman (2000 & 2007) describes the current social condition as 'liquid modernity' which is characterized by increased fluidity of socio-cultural structures, institutions, people, objects, and also places.

With these changes in mind, scholars argue that consumers and businesses likewise increasingly strive to be flexible and open to change, instead of aiming for permanence and solidity (Bardhi, Eckhardt & Arnould, 2012; Hanson, 2015). Along with this, de Kervenoael, Bajde & Schwob (2015) argue that also "[...] recent developments in retailing are marked by the corrosion of fixity and boundaries" (n. pag).

As a reaction to both, consumers' desire to live outstanding and ephemeral experiences, and the spatio-temporal fluidity of retail (Kervenoael, Bajde & Schwob, 2015), the fashion

industry has developed an innovative retail format, which redefines the concept of traditional and stable brick-and-mortar retail and thus, has led to the development of temporary retail sites, also known as pop-up stores. Pop-up stores can be defined as individual, temporary retail settings which arrive in empty storefronts, public spaces or within other retail stores and leave just as quickly as they 'popped up' (Niehm et al., 2007; Baras, 2015). Originally designed as mainly promotional retail settings, conventional pop-ups often aim to provide excusive, highly experiential interaction for consumers (Niehm et al., 2007), and thus, "[...] intervene in consumers' lives and take people by surprise" ('The Economist', 2009, para. 4).

According to industry professionals, pop-up retailing has grown out its status of being just a trend (Baras, 2015; Duncan, 2015). Instead, within the past few years it has already established as a commonly accepted and widely practiced and legitimate channel strategy (Baras, 2015). Therefore, retail experts already speak of a 'pop-up economy' and 'retail mainstream' (Duncan, 2015; 'Centre for Economics and Business Research', 2015). Today, everyone from Walmart to Hermes has turned to these temporary store formats to reach consumers where their full-line stores were not able to do so (Stephens, 2012). In addition, even big name online brands such as Google or Amazon have already jumped on the pop-up bandwagon to create novel and unique consumption experiences, and many nowadays successful retail brands once started out as pop-ups (Todd, 2015; Nicasio, 2014).

In fact, besides the initial idea of staging highly experiential retail environments, within the recent past, the concept of pop-up retailing has further developed and is currently also used by retailers to create exclusive sale- or clearing events (Warnaby et al., 2015). During these temporary events hosted and organized by a brand, consumers are able to purchase overstock items from past seasons, single pieces or seconds products on significant discounts. These pop-up stores, which have according to Warnaby et al. (2015) in the first place transactional objectives, are the primarily subjects of the present study.

1.2 Problem Discussion

The research problem is twofold. First of all, pop-up retailing is a relatively neglected element in the current retailing literature (Warnaby et al., 2015) and to date, temporary retail sites and consumer experiences within these spacial environments have not been extensively examined from a socio-cultural perspective.

Instead, studies centering on temporary retail sites either discuss factors of economic success (e.g. Baumgarth & Kastner, 2012), marketing and branding opportunities (e.g. Marciniak & Budnarowska, 2009; Surchi, 2011; Pomodoro, 2013; Warnaby et al., 2015) or pop-up retailing in terms of establishing differentiating strategies (e.g. Bergquist & Leinoff, 2011), for instance. Large parts of the contemporary pop-up literature focuses on the retailer's perspective and therefore, on the operational and managerial aspects of this retail format. This understanding of pop-up retailing is primarily based on exploratory case studies, as well as on store visits and interviews with store managers and brand representatives. Generally speaking,

these academic texts provide knowledge about the economic and strategic success of temporary stores, and are highly practitioner-focused.

In comparison to this, there are even fewer studies putting the consumer in the center of attention. Academic scholars have examined consumers' attitude towards pop-up retailing and along with this, their behavioral intentions (e.g. Niehm et al., 2007, Kim et al., 2009; Wei-Chen, 2011). This stream of research is anchored in quantitative assessments, and mainly examines the effect of one or more variables, such as psychographic or demographic characteristics for example, on store perceptions, and consumers' purchasing and patronage intentions. Hence, these studies are all based in psychological and economic disciplines and thus, are adapted from traditional marketing theory.

Very few researchers have focused on how consumers experience pop-up stores on a holistic level. De Lassus & Anido Freire (2014), as well as Holmgren & Olofsson (2015) were among the firsts who contributed to the understanding of pop-up stores by considering the cultural aspects of consumption and their influence on consumers' experiences. These scholars have contributed to the academic literature that examines temporary stores from a socio-cultural (de Lassus & Anido Freire, 2014), and a phenomenological perspective (Holmgren & Olofsson, 2015), both using qualitative methods. Their analyses comprise the cultural and social aspects which the practice of shopping involves with respect to the different meanings attached to it. When looking at the date of these publications it becomes obvious, that this research stream is relatively new, and can be therefore regarded as an emerging field. However, to date, the number of studies with a Consumer Culture approach is not sufficient yet. Hence, there is still a need to study the various ways in which shopping at pop-up stores is both practiced and experienced through a socio-cultural perspective.

In addition, since pop-up retailing is particularly relevant for fashion brands, parts of the existing literature on temporary retail sites has particularly focused on contributing to our understanding of fashion pop-up stores (e.g. Surchi, 2011; Pomodoro, 2013; Ryu, 2011), or has devoted attention to a specific fashion segment (e.g. de Lassus & Anido Freire, 2014). However, academic scholars have mainly neglected pop-up stores which focus on clearing and selling strategies, and have declared these purposes as secondary objectives (e.g. Surchi , 2011; Pomodoro, 2013). There are only a few scholars who have recognized this sub-category of temporary stores as an independent store type (e.g. Warnaby et al., 2015). Thus, to date, there is no study that has initially researched pop-up sales. Accordingly, focusing on pop-up outlets, as well as short-term stock- and sample sales, will not only add to the initial studies in the field. It will also enhance our knowledge of a form of pop-up retailing that has mainly been discounted before.

1.3   Research Aim and Research Questions

Extending the tradition of socio-cultural research, this paper aims to provide a socio-cultural analysis of the practices and experiences involved in visiting temporary sale events, and thus provides new insights for understanding contemporary consumption and retailing. Along with this, it aims to enhance our knowledge of how retail space shapes or influences these practices and shoppers' in-store experiences.

With regard to these considerations, the first research question focuses on understanding the retail environment at temporary sale events. As literature argues, the whole retail setting, defined as the physical and material environment of retail spaces, also referred to as retailscapes (Cachinho, 2014), plays an important role when it comes to the construction of meaning and identity (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). According to Peñaloza (1999) the engaging qualities of a retail space and along with this, consumer participation within a setting, highly influence the production and consumption of cultural meanings and experiences. Thus, in order to explore consumer behavior and experiences and their relation to retail space, it is crucial to first of all look at pop-up stores' retail settings and their environmental aspects, including the stores' layouts, design features and physical organizations. From there, the first research question reads as follows:

RQ1: How are pop-up sales organized?

Following up the last aspect, the second research issue concentrates on how pop-up retail spaces drive different forms of consumption practices. Therefore, it focuses on what shoppers do when visiting sale events, and how the physical store environment enables specific types of consumer experience. With this in mind, the following work regards shopping at pop-up stores as "[…] a consumption-oriented movement in a space where one has the possibility of making purchases" (Lehtonen & Mäenpää, 1997, p. 143). This in turn, illustrates that purchasing is not necessarily a part of shopping and leads to a view of consumption as an activity that also includes other aspects such as browsing, strolling around the retail site or socializing, for instance (Bäckström, 2013). By exploring shopping as a consumption activity that involves such different practices and multifaceted experiences, socio-cultural research has illustrated, that retail environments may foster different types of consumption activities (e.g. Peñaloza 1999; Sherry et al., 2001). While having the unique characteristics of pop-up stores in mind that include limited availability, a certain exclusive event character, and the retail spaces' short-lived nature, it seems interesting to look at consumers' consumption behavior. By recognizing the manifoldness and dynamics of consumption experiences while visiting and shopping within retail environments, the second research questions is:

RQ2: How does the temporary retail space at pop-up sales drive different forms of consumption practices and shopping experiences?

In order to shed light on these two interrelated questions, this thesis uses an ethnographic methodology that makes it possible to understand the retail phenomenon as a whole, by allowing the researcher to immerse in the field, and to experience the events of the retail site (Kozinets et al., 2002). Healy et al. (2007) agree upon this while arguing that "[…] ethnography is essential for capturing the natural flow of this holistic phenomenon" (p. 756), and therefore seems appropriate for studying shopping experiences from a consumer culture perspective. The data collection for the present multi-side study is based on extensive in-store observations, informal chats directly at the retail site, and ethnographic consumer interviews.

In tradition of retail ethnography, this study provides detailed portrayals of the retail events and seeks to provide thorough, yet micro sociological descriptions of the different ways shopping at pop-up sale events is practiced and experienced.

1.4 Contribution

The research on the characteristics and dynamics of consumption practices and shopping experiences in pop-up stores make various contributions to theoretical, as well as to the practical fields.

1.4.1 Theoretical Contribution

The following research study provides a double contribution to the existing literature.
First of all, it complements previous studies on pop-up retailing. For the first time it takes pop-up sale events into account, a temporary store type, which has mainly been neglected within the previous pop-up literature. Subsequently, it fills this gap in literature and sheds light to a store format which highly deviates from conventional pop-ups.
In addition, it provides new insights about consumption experiences, underlying meanings and practices in temporary retail settings from a socio-cultural perspective. Thus, the findings contribute to the yet very small amount of studies that explore the nature of experiences and consumption practices in this specific store format in tradition of cultural theory. The research project will therefore complete the existing literature on temporary stores, which is, to date, strongly influenced by psychological and economic approaches.

Furthermore, the empirical study explores retail space through a new example. Unlike prior accounts within the field of socio-cultural studies, the present work does not focus on spectacular retail sites such as themed retail environments (e.g. Gottdiener, 1997), brandscapes (e.g. Sherry, 1996; Peñaloza, 1999), themed brandstores (e.g. Kozinets et al, 2002) or brand museums (e.g. Hollenbeck, Peters & Zinkhan, 2008). As Fuentes (2011) declares, many scholars within the social sciences have mainly focused on impressive, outstanding and strategically planned retail spaces. In contrast to this, the retail sites discussed within this thesis can be categorized as outlet- or stock sale pop-up stores and are thus, rather unspectacular and less outstanding. As shown within the course of the analysis, temporary sale events differ from conventional stores in a variety of aspects, such as the store location, the organization of the retail space, the product presentation, and the role of sales staff and

social space. Thereby, pop-up sale events are presented as a hybrid form of retail space which is characterized by the simple and modest elements of a factory outlet, and simultaneously shows features that remind of flea markets and car boot sales, or of what Gregson & Crewe (2003) call 'alternative consumption spaces'. It further shows that such less spectacular retail spaces produce consumer experiences that have been previously associated with retail spectacles (e.g. Kozinets et al., 2004). Thus, this thesis argues, that pop-up sale events are hybrid consumption spaces, blending the ordinary and the spectacular. This view on consumption spaces represents a novel perspective, that has not been discussed within previous studies to this extend.

1.4.2 Practical Contribution

As mentioned in the beginning, a growing number of retailers make use of the pop-up concept to meet the postmodern customers' demands, to provide exclusive and ephemeral shopping experiences, and to vend their products through additional channels. According to recent statistics, in the UK pop-ups contribute £2.3 billion a year to the national economy, with 12.3% revenue growth in 2015. In addition, with 26,000 employed in the industry alone in the UK, pop-up retail has by now gained a relevant influence on the development of the labor market (Dunsby, 2015). According to Pop Up Republic, a social media marketing company specialized on pop-up retailing, back in 2014, the total value of the US pop-up industry was stated to be $50 billion (Kirkpatrick, 2014). In Europe, industry professionals claim Stockholm, London, Berlin and Paris to among the cities which have shown the highest rise of pop-up businesses within the past years (Nicasio, 2014). Based on these developments, the present research project does not only contribute to our theoretical knowledge, it is also relevant for industry professionals.

The present thesis illuminates that retailers need to be aware that consumption practices are shaped by social, as well as cultural aspects, and that experiences may be based on individual perceptions, thoughts and feelings.

Additionally, the results of the study contribute to the understanding of how a pop-up store's design and its organization, even though it might be simple and functional, influences consumer experiences. It also illustrates how temporary retail environments stimulate different forms of consumption, and how these practices are shaped by ephemerality and perishability, as both aspects are inherently connected with pop-up stores. Thus, it is shown that also unspectacular retail spaces stimulate certain experiences, which however, may differ from traditional consumption spaces.

The results are further used to provide managerial implications, which stationary retailers may use to provide the desired in-store experience when developing such a store format. Hence, new research in this area may influence the implementation and planning-process of temporary retail sites by providing suggestions that physical and intangible elements, and the store's organization influence the overall experience and further affect purchasing decisions.

1.5 Structure

The present thesis is structured as follows: The second chapter provides an introduction to the topic, by illuminating the general characteristics of pop-up retailing and therefore, serves as a basis to understand the concept of temporary shopping events. Furthermore it gives an overview of the existing literature that discusses pop-up stores from a managerial, as well as from a consumer-oriented perspective. While constituting the current pop-up literature, it further points out the gaps within previous research, this study aims to fill.

The thesis continues with a theoretical framework based on the concept of socio-cultural retailing. Drawing on Consumer Culture Theory, it further presents the complex characteristics of consumers' shopping experiences and their relation to retail space. After this, a methodological chapter follows which describes the ethnographic research methods used in this study and presents the analytical, as well as political and ethical considerations. Chapter five is dedicated to the results and presents a detailed analysis of the empirical findings. While keeping the research questions in mind, it starts with a discussion about the retail space at pop-up sale events, followed by an analysis of consumer practices and experiences within this space. Finally, conclusions are drawn, and managerial implications for the general retail sector are provided. In addition, the study's implementations for the society are illustrated, before the chapter ends with limitations and a personal reflection of the study, and suggestions for future research.

2   LITERATURE REVIEW

The following chapter starts by providing an overview about the concept of pop-up stores as it has been portrayed within previous research, and provides a general understanding of the features and characteristics of this store format. It further shows that scholars have examined how retailers use this retail format, which objectives they aspire, and how pop-up stores are operated within business practice. As constituted within the next sections, a comparably small part of the contemporary pop-up store literature has investigated the consumer perspective. With regard to the latter, psychological approaches are clearly predominant and highly focus on predicting consumer behavior. Furthermore, as shown within the course of this chapter, the managerial, as well as the consumer-focused literature mainly disregards pop-up stores with clearing objectives, and has purely focused on aesthetically appealing and well organized venues, which I refer to as 'conventional' pop-up stores.

2.1   Definition and General Characteristics of the Pop-Up Concept

Even though the concept of pop-up stores is announced as the "[...] latest expression of innovative solutions" in retailing (Musso, 2010, p. 37), to date, this topic has received rather little coverage within the international retailing literature (Pomodoro, 2013). Not surprisingly, a generally agreed definition of the term 'pop-up retailing' cannot be found within the recent literature. Gordon (2004) describes pop-up stores as temporary retail environments which suddenly appear in empty store fronts, sometimes even unannounced and by surprise. Similar to this, other authors refer to short-term physical retail space which intentionally rises up, and vanishes shortly after (Picot-Coupey, 2014; Kim et al., 2010; Surchi, 2011).

According to de Lassus & Anido Freire (2013), pop-up stores received their name by analogy with pop-up windows and pop-up advertisements that appear on computer screens, and are thus named after a form of online advertising. Other scholars refer to this type of retailing as 'guerilla stores' (Pomodoro, 2013), 'nomad stores' (Surchi, 2011) or 'flash stores' (Davis, n.d.), whereat all of them speak of same store format.

De Lassus & Anido Freire (2013) further claim, that the pop-up concept had its origin in London in the late 1990s, naming the brands Swatch and Levis to be among the first retailers experimenting with this store type. However, other authors date the debut of pop-up businesses back to the 2000s and name the Japanese fashion retailer Comme des Garçons and the marketing company Vacant to be the pioneers in pop-up retailing (Cochrane, 2010; Hutter, 2013). Though, despite this discrepancy in the historical background of this store format, there seems to be an agreement that pop-up retail has its roots in the fashion industry (Pomodoro, 2013).

As already mentioned before, one distinguishing factor to regular retail formats is the temporary character of such stores. Pop-ups are intentionally only available for a limited time (Picot-Coupey, 2014). De Lassus & Anido Freire (2013) agree upon this and further specify this time frame, by arguing that pop-up stores are open from a few days, up to one year.

Along with this, exclusivity and limited availability are stated to be further distinguishing factors of pop-up stores (Niehm et al., 2007). As Catalano & Zorzetto (2010) point out, this limited availability with regard to both, products and time, evokes in a sense of "[...] anxiety of being excluded from the event, of missing to visit something unique, fleeting and unrepeatable" (Catalano & Zorzetto, 2010, p. 8, in Pomodoro, 2013).

In addition, temporary stores are often mobile and characterized by flexibility and the possibility to open in every area or location (Kim et al., 2010). Following this argumentation, pop-up stores do not necessarily need to be placed in buildings, but are often rather dynamic, and thus, characterized by innovative locations (Niehm et al., 2007).

Within the past few years, pop-ups have become a worldwide phenomenon and along with this, temporary store formats have already emerged as a mainstream business practice (Kim et al., 2009), and have further found its way into the strategic marketing mix of a variety of retail firms (Pomodoro, 2013). Meanwhile the pop-up concept is not only limited to the retail industry. Temporary venues are also used by a variety of other businesses such as hotels, bars, restaurants or nightclubs, for instance (Surchi, 2011).

2.2 The Conventional Pop-Up Store as an Instrument of Experiential Marketing

2.2.1 Managerial Perspective

The main part of the existing literature on pop-up retailing concentrates on the retailers' perspectives and is highly practitioner-focused (Warnaby et al., 2015). These academic texts generally regard pop-up stores as strategic marketing tools, and mainly classify this store format to the field of experiential marketing (e.g. Pomodoro, 2013; Surchi et al., 2010; Picot-Coupey, 2013; Warnaby et al., 2015). The following paragraphs briefly discuss previous research on pop-up stores from a management perspective in order to provide a general comprehension of how conventional pop-up stores are used within contemporary marketing practice. Providing this background information is relevant to fully understand how this store format is primarily used and what distinguishes them from pop-up sale events.

2.2.1.1 Objectives and Motives

Communication and Branding Objectives
With regard to the business objectives of pop-up stores, the literature review reveals, that a considerable part of previous research has taken effort in categorizing pop-up businesses. In doing so, scholars identified different store types or stereotypes, based on the retailers' specific intentions when opening a temporary store (e.g. Surchi, 2011; Pomodoro, 2013; Warnaby et al., 2015).
Pomodoro (2013) for instance, suggests the category 'concept brand store' which is comparable to the brand's long-term flagship store and has mainly communication objectives. Similar to this category, Warnaby et al. (2015) refer to the 'brand pantheon', where the "[...] prime focus is on celebrating/promoting the brand" (Warnaby et al., 2015, p. 309). Such

communication objectives include brand building, the creation of a brand identity and the establishment of a certain image, as well as to generally enhance brand awareness (Surchi, 2011). Further, scholars stress that pop-up stores promote personalized face-to-face interaction between the consumer and the brand (Marciniak & Budnarowska, 2009; Warnaby et al., 2015).

Providing Sociality and Communal Experiences
Pomodoro (2013) further highlights the social event character of pop-up stores and claims that temporary stores serve to strengthen the affective and emotional relationship between the consumer and the brand. With regard to the notion of consumer tribes (Cova, Kozinets & Shankar, 2007), Pomodoro (2013) as well as Warnaby et al. (2015) speak of 'tribal gatherings' within temporary settings. Along with this, previous literature has found that providing sociality, but also significant experiences and meaningful entertainment, is seen as an important aspect of what Pomodoro (2013) calls the 'community pop-up store'. Such in-store experiences include discovery driven experiences, customer inspiration and the creation of enthusiasm and overall positive sensations (Marciniak & Budnarowska, 2009; Baumgarth & Kastner, 2012). This idea is underpinned by Russo Spena et al.'s (2011) study which focuses on the creation of experiences from a managerial perspective. Their work illustrates how the process of value co-creation in temporary retail environments emerges from the interaction between consumers and sales personnel. The study's findings show that successful value co-creation in temporary retail sites enhances brand loyalty, which satisfies "[...] both the firm's need to synthesize and share its brand values in an original way, as well as the consumer's need for experience and socialization" (Russo Spena et al., 2011, p. 35).

Testing New Products and Concepts
Furthermore, conventional pop-up businesses are used to test new products or a renewed brand concept, to introduce novel product lines, or to launch an emerging brand with a low budget or within a smaller scope (Marciniak & Budnarowska, 2009; Pomodoro, 2015). In addition, temporary stores are used to test new markets. A recently conducted study by Picot-Coupey (2013) found that marketers also use pop-up stores as foreign operation modes. Hence, companies use temporary stores to test how their brand is perceived in other countries and to identify how to adapt existing concepts to other markets, when expanding their businesses across borders. In addition, Picot-Coupey's (2013) multiple case study reveals that brands open pop-up stores in foreign countries to make their company more international, and to develop a business network with new stakeholders. Therefore, such short-term 'market tester' stores (Warnaby et al., 2015) can be coincidently regarded as market research tools (Pomodoro, 2013).

In addition, the pop-up concept is used by online retailers who either aim to become more tangible by opening short-time stores, to implement a multichannel strategy, or to overcome the limitations inherited in the nature of e-businesses (Marciniak & Budnarowska, 2009; Bergquist & Leinoff, 2011). Bergquist & Leinoff's (2011) work shows that temporary stores can make the online retailer and its merchandise physically visible, which gives consumers the opportunity to 'touch and feel' the products. As a consequence, the authors suggest that

temporary pop-up stores can help online stores to distinguish from competitors, which may result in gaining competitive advantages.

2.2.1.2 Factors of Success

Besides the business objectives of temporary retail sites, also the factors of success are a highly discussed topic within the retail literature. Baumgarth & Kastner's (2012) body of work presents an analysis of relevant dimensions of success for pop-up businesses and suggests a 'success factors model', which is hierarchically structured into a micro and a macro level.

Whereat the model's macro factors include attributes which generally affect any kind of store format such as the merchandise mix, brand fit, target audience, employees, market communication, storytelling, business culture and specific know-how (e.g. Kotler & Armstrong, 2010), other scholars who contributed to the contemporary pop-up literature have rather devoted attention to success factors on the micro level.

Location

In accordance with Baumgarth & Kastner (2012), researchers claim that finding the right location is crucial for pop-up retailers (Picot-Coupey, 2013; Knoops, 2015). A recent study by Knoops (2015) illustrates that pop-up retailers rarely consider competitors when choosing their facilities. Therefore, pop-up stores are often strategically located in high-traffic areas, urban shopping districts, or in highly prestigious locations (Surchi, 2011). But also extraordinary and innovative locations such as empty factories or art galleries can be turned into temporary retail sites (Niehm et al., 2007; Hurth & Krause, 2010). In this sense, Picot-Coupey (2013) speaks of 'unrestricted locations'.

Retail Environment and Store Design

Previous research claims that the store design and the physical and material environment of retail spaces, has a significant impact on a pop-up store's success (Baumgarth & Kastner, 2012). This goes along with Picot-Coupey's (2013) opinion. Her work illustrates the importance of creativity and giving the store a designer appearance. This notion is consistent with Marchetti & Quinz's (2007) view of pop-up stores as a form of art, and Holmgren & Olofsson (2015) who describe pop-ups as glamorously decorated and consistently beautiful venues. Especially this last aspect is related to the retailer's aim to offer a physical retail setting that provides consumers with aesthetically appealing experiences and a sense of discovery (Marciniak & Budnarowska, 2009).

Limited Availability and Exclusivity

Besides the location and design factors, researchers also claim exclusiveness and limited availability of products to be crucial (Baumgarth & Kastner, 2012; Hurth & Krause, 2010). In accordance with traditional marketing theory, limited editions and temporary availability have similar effects as discounts, and therefore represent buying incentives (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). Scholars further claim that purchasing impulses in such retail environments are intensified, since consumers may not know how long the pop-up store exists (Hurth & Krause, 2010).

2.2.1.3 Opportunities and Obstacles

Another managerial aspect related to pop-up establishments scholars have extensively researched is related to opportunities and threats retailers should consider. According to Hurth & Krause (2010), opportunities include the low costs of opening and operating a temporary store, and along with this, the relatively low risk (Marciniak & Budnarowska, 2009). Especially with regard to the high rents in urban areas and on high streets, pop-up stores further offer landlords the opportunity to rent out empty store fronts for a short period of time, which creates a win-win situation for both sides (Marciniak & Budnarowska, 2009).

In addition, also advertising for this store format is not associated with high costs, as retailers do not invest in mass media communication to promote their temporal stores (Hurth & Krause, 2010). Instead, word of mouth is the most important instrument for making consumers aware of this retail format which rises awareness and makes other consumers curious to visit the store (Hurth & Krause, 2010; Surchi, 2011). As Marciniak & Budnarowska (2009) argue, especially fashion consumption and dissemination traditionally rely on social relationships, personal referral and word of mouth. However, in times of the Internet and mobile technologies, it has become even easier to spread messages and information, and thus makes it possible to reach broader audiences within a short period of time (Woerndl et al., 2008). Marciniak & Budnarowska's (2009) study builds upon this argumentation. The authors suggest that retailers should make use of modern technologies and social networks to encourage consumers to create user generated content, and thus, use viral marketing techniques to promote their pop-up stores. Ryu (2011) supports their view, by stressing that nowadays social media is a commonly accepted tool to increase awareness and to create a certain desired buzz about pop-up venues.

The academic literature further discusses risks which opening a pop-up store may entail. This includes issues regarding correct cost calculations, defining the optimal length of operating the store and finding the right balance between communicating the event and relying on word of mouth propaganda (Hurth & Krause, 2010). In addition to this, Campillo-Lundbeck (2008) argues that the increasing number of pop-up stores leads to the notion that temporary stores might lose its attraction and character of innovativeness and novelty, if the concept becomes unexceptional. This aspect is underpinned by Pomodoro (2013) who emphasizes the importance of 'never falling into the ordinary'.

2.2.2 Consumer Perspective

In contrast to the previous chapter, other scholars have devoted attention to the consumers' perspective and in particular to their attitude and behavioral intentions towards pop-up retailing. As shown within the following sections, psychological studies have largely focused on explaining causal relationships between certain variables, while aiming to understand and predict consumers' patronage intentions. Picking up the idea of pop-up stores as a form of experiential marketing once more, large parts of the academic literature regard temporary retail installations as stores that are mainly staged to create "[...] sensation-rich and unique experiences" (Niehm et al., 2009, p. 134) and to offer consumers an "[...] exclusive and highly experiential interaction" (Niehm et al, 2007, p. 2). Studies with a consumer cultural approach

have devoted attention to how consumers perceive these experiences, their motivation to visit these venues and their practices, while taking shoppers' individual accounts in the center of attention.

2.2.2.1 Psychological Approaches towards Pop-Up Retailing

Niehm et al. (2007) were among the firsts who explored consumers' views on pop-up retailing. Their study aims to understand shoppers' perceptions of benefits and concerns related to pop-up stores and along with this, their attitude and behavioral intentions towards this retail form. By looking at different demographic characteristics, the authors contribute to the general understanding of how age, gender, community size and geographic region affect consumers' perception of pop-up stores. Within their work, the authors present the three constructs 'Product Novelty and Uniqueness', 'Facilitator of Purchase Decision' and 'Product Trial and Unique Experience' which reflect consumers' perceived benefits and concerns towards pop-up stores. By using Fishbein & Ajzen's (1975) Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) model as a conceptional framework, the authors stress a close relation between consumers' beliefs about the product novelty and uniqueness of pop-up stores, and their attitudes and intentions to engage in pop-up store experiences. Another finding presented in the study is that pop-up stores are potentially appealing and interesting to consumers of all age groups, which implies that retailers can reach a wide range of consumer segments. Even though the study shows that consumers living in urban or suburban areas have greater knowledge about and experiences with pop-up retailing, the attitude towards this retail format was found to be not related to consumers' community size. Therefore, the authors claim that pop-up businesses can be an appealing marketing strategy for retailers in cities, as well as in rural areas. This finding may serve as a guidance for geographic market entries of pop-up stores. In addition, Niehm et al.'s (2007) work reveals that female consumers have a higher receptiveness to experiential marketing and consumer engagement, and a higher preference for innovative products, brands and related offerings.

Kim et al. (2009), as well as Wei-Chen (2011) follow up on this study and focus on how certain psychographic characteristics shape consumers' perceptions of pop-up stores and their patronage intentions. Both studies adapt on Niehm et al.'s (2007) perspective and use the TRA model as a theoretical framework for their quantitative studies. However, whereat Kim et al. (2009) explore the relationships between consumer innovativeness, market mavenism, shopping enjoyment, beliefs, attitude, and purchasing intentions towards pop-up retail, Wei-Chen (2011) additionally takes consumers' cultural differences into account. Even though the two studies have mainly similar approaches and aims, Kim et al.'s (2009) work focuses on U.S. customers, whereupon Wei-Chen (2011) explores Taiwanese consumers' views on temporary retail stores.

As one of the main findings, Kim et al. (2009) reveal a positive correlation between consumers' level of innovativeness and enjoyment of shopping and their attitude towards the hedonic aspects of pop-up retail. This includes appreciating both, the excitement of in-store experiences, as well as the novel and unique characteristics of temporary stores.

Interestingly, purchasing was found to be secondary, which highlights the consumers' demand for shopping experiences one more. This idea is further supported by Ryu (2011) who stresses that consumers with a need for hedonic experiences have a highly positive attitude towards pop-up retailing.

Whereat most authors' studies generally discuss the phenomenon of temporary stores without concentrating on a certain type of this retail format, Ryu (2011) limits his research on consumer views and their shopping intentions towards fashion pop-up stores. His findings suggest that fashion involvement, as well as a positive attitude towards pop-up stores in general, have a positive impact on purchasing intentions and impulse buying behavior.

2.2.2.2 Consumer Cultural Approaches towards Pop-Up Retailing

Whereat the four studies mentioned above are quantitative studies, all based on traditional marketing theory with a clear focus on predicting behavior, other scholars have explored consumer behavior and their experiences through the lens of Consumer Culture Theory and by using qualitative methods.

While concentrating on luxury pop-up stores in France, de Lassus & Anido Freire (2013) used a nethographic approach, a sub-category of ethnographic research, to examine customer motivations for visiting temporary retail sites. In doing so, the authors focused on exploring which aspects of temporary retail sites fascinate consumers, and further studied shoppers' perceptions and feelings when shopping at such venues. By analyzing interactive exchanges between Internet users, the study highlights the curiosity and excitement consumers experience once the opening of a pop-up store is announced. The authors further claim that individuals express "[...] great pleasure of being able to go there and be the first to buy" and argue that pop-ups stores strengthen the 'mythical history' of luxurious brands, as they are perceived as unique, rare and precious (p. 66). In addition, the atmosphere in luxury pop-up stores is experienced as lighter than in the flagship store which makes customers feel more welcome and relaxed at the same time. Hence, in pop-up store environments consumers do not feel intimidated, as some of them do when entering traditional luxury stores. Therefore, the study shows that luxury pop-up stores add new features to the traditional luxury sector which include informality, friendliness, lucidity and accessibility in a context of shared emotions.

Similar to de Lassus & Anido Freire (2013), also Holmgren & Olofsson (2015) used a qualitative approach to study consumer experiences in temporary retail sites and to find out how experiences in temporal retail settings are shaped by trends of the contemporary consumer culture, such as ephemeral culture, Romanticism and pseudo-events. By conducting phenomenological interviews with shoppers, as well as in-store observations directly at the retail sites, their work contributes to the understanding of consumers' perceptions of pop-up retailing through a phenomenological perspective. Their recent study illustrates that the ephemeral nature of pop-up stores, and along with this the excitement and exclusiveness, makes consumers who are searching for new and exclusive experiences feel 'important' and 'special'. Besides this, their work reveals that exclusive and ephemeral store experiences

result in consumers' wish to let other people take part in their experiences, which leads to the creation of a virtual buzz around visiting the event through sharing experiences on social media platforms. In this sense, the authors speak of 'experiencing temporal social belonging'. In addition, the study highlights that pop-up stores can serve as an in-between alternative between digital and traditional brick-and-mortar retail, as the authors claim that pop-up stores make online brands more tangible and thus, more real for consumers. This notion goes along with what has already been discussed as a managerial objective before (Marciniak & Budnarowska, 2009; Bergquist & Leinoff, 2011). Along with this, Holmgren & Olofsson (2015) point out that experiencing an online brand being materialized in a temporary environment increases consumers' trust, and enhances the emotional attachment to a brand or a product, and additionally creates long-term relationships (Holmgren & Olofsson, 2015).

As shown within this chapter, to date, the literature on pop-up businesses is still rather incomplete with regard to two issues. First of all, our understanding of pop-up stores is limited on well planned and thoroughly organized stores in which staging an selling exclusive, yet ephemeral consumption experiences is in the center of attention. Temporary retail sites that focus on selling are excluded from the discussion.
Furthermore, socio-cultural studies are clearly underrepresented. Hence, this chapter has illustrated the need for both, a broader categorization of pop-ups, and the need to explore this retail format from varied perspectives.

3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The following chapter starts by introducing the concept of socio-cultural retailing and presents an overview of the underlying theory of consumer experiences and the creation of multiple meanings and identities in retail environments. In doing so, it aims to provide a broad understanding of the recent cultural turn in marketing theory (Borghini et al., 2009), and illustrates the processes and complex structures which influence and shape consumer experiences in retailscapes by considering the social and cultural aspects of shopping and consumption.

3.1 Socio-Cultural Retailing - A Theoretical Departure

The consumer, and along with this consumer behavior, has always been a central object of study within the area of retail marketing (Fuentes & Hagberg, 2013). According to Brown & Dant (2009), the most commonly used theoretical approaches in this field are either based in the discipline of psychology, or derive from the field of economics. Such traditional marketing theories believe that customers are rational individuals who purely attempt to obtain certain benefits from a product or service (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010; Schmitt, 1999). Hence, traditional marketing neglects the socio-cultural dimensions of shopping and consumption, and thus regards human beings as autonomous, self-interested, calculative agents (Fuentes & Hagberg, 2013). Therefore, within this stream of marketing, utilitarian product benefits and features that differentiate the brand from competitors' offerings are primarily of interest (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010).

In contrast to this, the field of socio-cultural research has devoted attention to the dynamic relationships between consumer behavior, the marketplace and cultural meanings (Arnould & Thompson, 2005), and has shown that consumption practices are inherently social and cultural, and cannot be seen as separate entities (Fuentes & Hagberg, 2013). In addition, this research stream regards retail sites as spaces where identities (e.g. Jackson & Holbrook, 1995), gender (e.g. Gregson & Crewe, 1998), ethnicity (e.g. Friend & Thompson, 2003), experiences (e.g. Kozinets et al., 2002) and multiple meanings (e.g. Bäckström, 2013) are being created and reproduced. Thus, socio-cultural studies have contributed to the movement from a system based on 'selling spaces', to another one anchored in 'consumer places' (e.g. Cachinho, 2014; Crewe & Lowe, 1995). With regard to the growing number of studies and empirical research within the field of socio-cultural retailing, Borghini et al. (2009) speak of a cultural turn within retail marketing that clearly differentiates itself from traditional marketing theory.

According to these considerations, cultural and social aspects are seen as the main influencer of consumer experiences and meanings, which simultaneously shape and frame supposable action, feeling, and thought (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). Correspondingly, academics following this research stream share the notion that culture is not a single homogenous system of collectively shared meanings, lifestyles and unitary values. Instead, as Arnould & Thompson (2005) clarify, consumer culture is "[…] a social arrangement in which the

relations between lived culture and social resources, and between meaningful ways of life and the symbolic and material resources on which they depend, are mediated through markets" (p. 869).

Hence, consumer practices, and along with this experiences, processes, structures and underlying meanings are expressed and negotiated by individuals in specific social situations, roles and relationships (Arnould & Thompson, 2005).

3.2 The Multifaceted and Complex Character of Consumers' Shopping Experiences and their Relation to Retail Space

3.2.1 Definitional Discussion of Experiences

As Arnould & Thompson (2005) claim, consumption and shopping practices, and in particular their socio-cultural dimensions, have been the most widely studied phenomena which can be identified with the Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) tradition.
Without any doubt, researching shopping experiences and the contradictions and tensions, which the practice of shopping contains, is a rather intricate topic, characterized by ambiguity and complexity. Not surprisingly, customer experience is a highly discussed research field which has witnessed a considerable growth of interest within a variety of disciplines, since the practice of shopping has become a central cultural phenomenon in the postmodern society, and has thus, shaped and influenced consumers' everyday lives (Falk & Campbell, 1997).

Generally speaking, retailers aim to provide memorable and meaningful experiences to their customers in order to influence their purchase decisions, which in turn is the essence of experiential marketing (Schmitt, 1999; Boswijk, Thijssen & Peelen, 2007). This notion is identical to the main purpose of pop-up stores, as it has been discussed earlier. While having economic, as well as branding objectives in mind, retailers aim to create personal and engaging experiences, in order to make customers well acquainted with their brand. Further, they try to influence consumers' opinions about the brand or products, and along with this, their purchasing preferences in a preferably positive manner. In addition, experiences enhance the perceived value of the product or service, contribute to build brand loyalty (Pine & Gilmore, 1999) and make it possible to bring the brand to life (Healy et al., 2007).

From a holistic consumer perspective, "[...] customer experience is the sum of all experiences a customer has with a provider of goods and services [...]" (Hart, Grazyna & Cadogan, 2013, p. 1774). Schmitt (1999) further specifies this declaration and claims that experiences are defined as sensations or feelings, which can result from direct observation and participation, and are therefore not self-generated, but induced by external stimuli (Wei-Chen, 2013). In this sense, Boswijk, Thijssen & Peelen (2007) speak of the act of 'encountering' or 'undergoing something' and refer to an involving and engaging process.

Such external stimuli can be provoked from product and brand experiences, physical surroundings and environments, as well as from human interactions (Schmitt, 1999).

However, as Healy et al. (2007) argue, these experiential elements do not work in isolation, but rather function in an integrated mechanism.

3.2.2 More that Simply Hedonic or Utilitarian - The Characteristics of Experiences

Whereat traditional marketing theory divides consumer experiences mainly in utilitarian and hedonic values (e.g. Babin et al., 1994), CCT scholars regard consumer experiences as broader and more complex than these simple dimensions imply.

Hirschman & Holbrook (1982) who were among the first representatives of the CCT tradition bring up the idea of shopping with a work mentality, but simultaneously describe consumption as a pleasant activity which is highly personal and subjective. Even though also Babin et al. (1994) claim that shopping experiences can embrace both, rational and task-oriented behavior, and playful and fun activities, traditional marketing scholars often describe these opposite characteristics of consumers' shopping experiences separated from each other, without considering any other possible dimension.

With regard to this, Miller et al. (1998) notice that especially the understanding of shopping as a hedonic activity is often taken for granted within the academic literature. Scholars who focus on hedonic experiences argue that positive sentiments can result from high involvement, arousal, perceived freedom, as well as from escapism and fantasy fulfillment (Bloch & Richins, 1983; Hirschman, 1983). Hence, hedonic value is often associated with leisure shopping, a consumption form which translates into recreation, relaxation, entertainment and pleasure, which has given much attention within the academic literature (e.g. Bäckström, 2011; Bäckström, 2013). However, these scholars coevally support the idea that also leisure shopping cannot be explained by categorizing consumer experiences into two variables. For example, Miller at al. (1998) argue against this basic classification. Their work illuminates different forms of shopping practices, and along with this, consumer's various shopping experiences. These experiences were not only found to be diverse, the authors' work further shows that different ways of shopping, including varied consumption practices and meanings, can be associated with certain social groups.

In a similar vein, also Bäckström (2013) argues that two dimensions are not sufficient to illuminate consumer experiences. As the author further states, multiple different, yet contrasting and dynamic experiences work together and define the overall experience. Her findings illustrate the complex and intricate characteristics of consumers' shopping experiences while claiming that consumer experiences are shaped by manifoldness and multifacetedness. As Bäckström (2013) further states, different experiences, and along with this, contrasting feelings and perceptions, are not fully separable, as shopping activities can enable many sentiments. This goes along with Kent & Kirby's (2009) position. The authors show that consumption experiences can be satisfactory, yet frustrating and involve likewise delightful and terrible (Arnould et al., 2005), or as Friend & Thompson (2003) point out, 'nasty' aspects.

3.2.3 The Creation of Experiences - An Interactive Process

With regard to the construction process of such multifaceted experiences, the academic literature speaks of a certain flow between various static and dynamic elements within the experiential environment, which stimulate consumer engagement and interaction (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Static elements are delivered in a pre-designed state and include the hard and tangible features of a retail site. These elements include the functional characteristics of the merchandise, as well as the sensual and aesthetic benefits that arise from a store's physical design features. Additionally, static design elements embrace the atmospheric and ambient conditions in a retail environment (Healy et al., 2007). Hence, static elements are all physical and ambient features in a pre-defined space.

In contrast to this, a store's dynamic elements refer to the relational context between the customer and the store or the staff members, as well as consumer - consumer interaction. Dynamic elements allow the shopper to identify with the retailer. Hence, the interaction with human, warm and soft aspects of the retail site is central for creating a sense of belonging and to stimulate interactive experiences (Pullman & Gross, 2004; Healy et al., 2007). As Healy et al. (2007) point out, dynamic design elements also comprise themes and theatrics, also referred to as 'symbolic narratives' that run throughout the whole store (Kozinets et al., 2002). These symbols create a certain story which reflects a period, place or fantasy (Healy et al., 2007). With regard to the latter, consumer interaction generally plays an important role in retail environments, but especially in so-called retail theatres, in which customer involvement contributes to the overall experience being staged (Healy et al., 2007). This thought goes along with Boswijk, Thijssen & Peelen's (2007) idea, that consumer experiences do not only emerge from the passive consumption of the retail setting, but are enhanced by the process of participation. In order to consume the experiences and to create a certain value, shoppers have to become actors within the retail experience "[...] by taking cues from the static environment of the store in order to produce the dynamic characteristic of the retail experience" (Healy et al., 2007, p. 755).

An example for the importance of consumer participation and its influence on their experiences is Peñaloza's (1999) visual ethnography of Nike Town, a five-story flagship store located in Chicago. Peñaloza (1999) argues that the retail space as a whole, including its images, product displays, colors and design, engages consumers while moving through the store. The store's organization, its architecture and artifacts remind of the characteristics of a museum, and thus turn the shopping destination to a place for consuming experiences. Nike Town is therefore an example for a postmodern retail environment where experiences and cognition blend. Hence, the experience itself is the most important product sold at such venues which center on consumption, leisure and stimulation at the same time (Peñaloza, 1999). This view is theoretically consistent with Kozinets et al. (2002) who also conducted a research project on themed retail venues. They claim that "[…] consumers go to themed flagship brand stores not only to purchase products; they go to experience the brand, company, and products in an environment largely controlled by the manufacturer" (p. 18). However, the authors agree that spectacular experiences depend on the consumers' willingness to participate, and further stress the do-it-yourself characteristics in the process of

experience creation. Consequently, it is not the retailer who dominates consumers in terms of consumption. Instead, within these spectacular venues, the relationship between producer and consumer seems well balanced (Kozinets et al., 2002; Fuentes & Hagberg, 2012).

3.2.4 Retail Stores as Cultural Resource Providers - The Construction of Meaning and Identities in Retail Settings

According to Gabriel & Lang (2006), identities are constantly developed and renewed through lifestyle choices and reflect a way of defining the consumer's self in terms of similarities and differences in relation to others. The identity describes 'who a person is', and is formed and reinforced through consumption processes, and the symbolic meanings attached to them (Gabriel & Lang, 2006).

CCT researchers agree that the whole retail setting, including its static, as well as dynamic elements, plays an important role when it comes to the construction of meaning and identity, according to the definition given above. Hence, the store itself is not regarded as a physical container in which objects are simply placed, and in which consumption merely happens (Woermann & Rokka, 2015). Instead, CCT scholars commonly agree that the physical and situational surroundings provide a basis for the meanings and significance related to roles, relationships and behavior. Therefore, the retail environment cannot be separated from the way consumers buy, or how they feel about it. As Arnould & Thompson (2005) further argue, retailscapes provide consumers with an extensive and heterogeneous palette of resources, from which individual and collective identities are being created. Therefore, the creation of identities and meanings can be realized through the consumption of both, the products and the place.

According to these considerations, the act of shopping is practiced to accomplish personal projects or goals for which shoppers mobilize their own economic, social, and ideological resources (Cachinho, 2014). Hence, consumers identify themselves through the practice of shopping and constantly try to make sense of their environment, while relating to symbols and along with this, perceived meanings (Arnould & Thompson, 2005).

While offering a mix of these tangible and intangible resources that can be consumed by shoppers at the retail site, firms act as resource suppliers (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). In this sense, Arnould & Thompson (2005) compare the marketplace to an arena where the consumer constructs and transforms the self-image through the act consumption, and by adopting and transforming multiple meanings connected to products, brands and the retail space. Hence, the engaging qualities of a retail space and along with this, the consumer's participation, highly influence the production and consumption of diverse experiences and cultural meanings (Peñaloza, 1999).

An example for the creation of different social and cultural meanings in one marketplace can be found in Jackson & Holbrook's (1995) work which concentrates on the relation between shopping and identity. While focusing on shopping malls, the authors stress that the creation and transformation of identities varies with the dynamics of class, gender, ethnicity, and

generation. With regard to retail environments, the study further highlights how meaning is not only given to goods, but also to the physical environment and the artifacts inside the retail setting, which underpins Arnould & Thompson's (2005) argumentation. The physical place as a whole, including its intangible elements, was found to be meaningful for consumers visiting the venue. Furthermore, the authors illuminate the social characteristics of retail spaces (Jackson & Holbrook, 1995). This argument is further strengthened by Lethonen & Mäenpää (1997) whose study reveals that shopping does not only derive from the possibility of autonomy. Quite the opposite is the case. Shopping, and especially shopping with hedonic value, is often seen as a way to spend time with one another which consequently facilitates the creation of common and shared identities (Lethonen & Mäenpää, 1997).

Furthermore, academic scholars have especially devoted attention to themed brand stores and the relationship between the retail side and customer experiences in such venues (Sherry et al., 2001; Kozinets et al., 2002). In a similar vein as Peñaloza (1999) who has been addressed earlier, Sherry et al. (2001) examined the retail space of ESPN Zone in Chicago, a spacious sports-themed retail complex operated by the Walt Disney Company. Their work illustrates that the retailer does not only display the merchandise in an extraordinary environment, the retail site also offers a variety of artifacts which invite consumers to spend time at the retail site and encourages them to participate in the consumption process. In the specific case of ESPN Zone, these artifacts were found to be video games, but also real gaming activities related to sports, as well as screening rooms showing theme related content. Hence, the authors claim that experience itself is the product sold in physical retail spaces in which the consumption of the actual place plays an important role, as these spaces provide meaningful experiences induced by the retail setting as a whole (Sherry et al., 2001; Kozinets et al., 2002).

As shown within this chapter, Consumer Culture Theory refers to a variety of theoretical perspectives which discuss the dynamic relationships between consumer behavior, the marketplace and cultural meanings (Arnould & Thompson, 2005), and cannot be seen as one single grand theory. Research which draws on this approach does not aim to provide stiff claims, but rather represents multiple theoretical approaches and research goals. Further, Consumer Culture Theory does not determine action as a causal force. Instead, as illustrated, scholars following this research stream agree that consumer practices, experiences, identities, and meanings are diverse and sometimes overlapping, and are expressed and negotiated by consumers in specific social situations, roles and relationships (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). Despites the notion that social and cultural attributes are seen as the main influencer of experience, meaning, action and consumer behavior, this chapter has shown that also retail environments and thus, retail spaces play a vital role in these processes.

4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

With regard to the research aim and the small body of previous research available, a qualitative method with an exploratory approach seems adequate to investigate the research subject. Based on a relatively small number of samples, qualitative research traditionally focuses on gaining insights, and developing a deep understanding of the research subject, instead of raising the claim to generalize to the population (May, 2010).

The present research is grounded in ethnography, which is both a set of methods, as well as an outcome (Crang & Cook, 2007). In line with ethnographic tradition, adapting a constructivist ontological stance seems highly appropriate in order to investigate consumers' practices and the experiences and meanings attached to shopping at pop-up sale events. Constructivism argues that reality does not exist external to the researcher and has to be investigated through the process of scientific inquiry. In contrast to positivism, constructivism claims that truth and meaning are created by individual's interactions and their interplay with the world. Hence, meaning is not simply discovered, but constructed by human being. Since individuals construct their personal meanings in various ways, even in relation to the same phenomenon, multiple and inconsistent, but equally valid accounts of the world can exist (Gray, 2009).

As illustrated in the next sections, the research methodology is based on a multi-method approach which integrates more than one data collection technique. In particular, the plurality of research methods is manifested in the use of extensive in-store observations, which generated both fieldnotes and photographs, and is complemented with informal chats and personal interviews with consumers visiting the retail sites.

The following paragraphs first of all illustrate the concept of ethnographic research and demonstrate its methodological fit for the present research study. Along with this, the course of action for collecting the empirical data, including the research strategy and the analytical, as well as ethical and political considerations are presented.

4.1 Capturing Consumer Experiences and Practices - The Call for Ethnographic Methodologies

Historically, the development of ethnographic research can be traced back to researchers' concern to understand the world-views and ways of life of actual people in the contexts of their everyday lived experiences (Crang & Cook, 2007). Ethnographic studies explore human behavior in natural settings, while being aware that social knowledge cannot be developed without an understanding of the symbolic world of the study's subject (Elliot & Jankel-Ellitot, 2003). In this respect, ethnographic research is often employed to answer the 'whys' and 'hows' of human behavior, opinion, and experience. Thus, seeing the world through the objects of a study's eyes is seen as a key element in ethnography. Further, adapting and using their shared cultural and symbolic meanings is seen as a fundamental aspect of the empathic process of understanding (Fielding, 1993; Elliot & Jankel-Ellitot, 2003). Denzin & Lincoln (2005) agree upon the importance of deep understanding, and further argue that ethnographic

approaches provide holistic accounts through description and interpretation. Hence, ethnographic studies concentrate on understanding human behavior, thoughts and emotions, rather than on deriving predictions (Elliot & Jankel-Ellitot, 2003). Ethnographies put a certain "[...] emphasis on the micro-cultural meanings and value systems that pattern consumption" (Elliot & Jankel-Ellitot, 2003, p. 216).

According to Crang & Cook (2007), ethnographic methods are an appropriate way of collecting data on, and in, a vast number of settings. Kozinets et al. (2002) point out that ethnographic methodologies are especially suitable for understanding consumer experiences and events in retail settings in an integrated manner.

In order to capture the natural flow of the retail experience on a holistic level, and to understand its processes and components, the researcher has to look at a wider sphere of context, including temporal, spatial, social and personal aspects which provides a suitable basis for collecting the data, and later on, for facilitating the analysis. Thus, the researcher experiences and witnesses what is being expressed, said and done by immerging within the fluid mix of physical and intangible elements of a retail space (Healy et al., 2007). This opinion is underpinned by Corner (2004) who stresses the advantage of gaining an insider's look in the authentic world of the subject studied.

With regard to the latter, the following chapters further illuminate the concept of ethnographic observations, followed by ethnographic interviews. Both methods take advantage of the situational circumstances with the researcher taking part in the retail event by visiting the actual retail site.

4.2 Ethnographic Observations

4.2.1 Participant Observations

In accordance with Crang & Cook (2007), Elliot & Jankel-Elliot (2003) state that participant observation can be seen as the essence of ethnographic methods. By being directly in the field, the observer gets involved in community life, observes and talks to consumers while learning from their view of reality (Agar, 1996). Wogan (2004) describes the process of participant observations with the phrase 'deep hanging out' which is, according to Crang & Cook (2007), the most suitable phrase of describing the core of this method.

The process of participant observation can be differentiated in three stages, whereat the first one describes the need to gain access to a certain community or setting. Followed by this, the researcher either lives or works among the people under study, but most importantly participates in their practices, in order to comprehend their worldviews, and lastly, makes sense of these experiences through writing an account of the community's culture (Crang & Cook, 2007). Since pop-up sale events are open to the public, gaining access to the field of observations only requires the knowledge about time and place of the events.

As literature further claims, being a participant in a culture requires the researcher to develop relationships with the people in the setting who can tell him/her about their experiences, thoughts and beliefs. In the best case it further includes an immersion of the researcher's self in the community (Hunt, 1989). Following this argumentation, it becomes obvious that this extensive form of participant observations requires a considerably large amount of time, which goes along with Crang & Cook's (2007) opinion, who claim that ethnographic studies are often of longitudinal nature. For the present research, a longitudinal study was not only impossible with regard to the scope of a master thesis, in addition the majority of pop-up events I visited were only open between one and four days. Due to this ephemerality, I visited each event at least once, and some of them every day until the stores closed down again, which led to a form of ethnographic research Pink & Morgan (2013) call short-term ethnography.

4.2.2 Choosing the Sites of Observation

With regard to the unpredictable nature of pop-up stores, the sampling for choosing the retail sites for observations has been based on an availability sampling. An availability sample can be defined as a sampling technique where the subjects of study are selected due to their convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher (May, 2010). From there, the first step was to find temporary stores with clearing and selling objectives in a reachable distance.

Since pop-up stores often use social-media networks to communicate to their target audience (Ryu, 2011), my research on suitable stores in the Øresund region began on the social media platform Facebook. The public Facebook page 'Fashion Facts' was found to be a promotional page that primarily creates and shares Facebook events for upcoming shopping events. The website describes itself as the largest online forum where consumers can get the latest updates about upcoming stock- and sample sales in the Danish region Sjælland. While cooperating directly with retailers and whole sellers, 'Fashion Facts' informs its followers about these events by posting information and details about imminent stock and collection sales.

Similar to 'Fashion Facts', the Facebook pages 'Modeutförsäljningar', 'Lagersalg Danmark' and 'Selected Brands Dk - Stock & Sample Sale' were visited on a regular basis to gain information about upcoming pop-up events. Additionally, I expanded my research on Instagram. Since I had previous knowledge that fashion companies such as Wood Wood and Acne Studios for instance, had shared information about upcoming pop-up clearing events on Instagram before, I started to follow several Scandinavian fashion brands with retail sites in Skåne and Copenhagen on Instagram, as well. Both platforms provided enough information to find suitable pop-up events.

In total, observations took place during eleven pop-up sale events, all located in the wider Copenhagen area, between March and May 2016.

My observations lasted between approximately thirty minutes and up to three hours per store visit. The observation time was highly depended on the venues' sizes, as well as on the material to observe and the present actors in the field. Since some pop-up stores were open during the same days, I divided my observation days in a morning observation at one retail

site, and an afternoon observation at another. This made it possible to visit more than one event during one day.

The following table presents an overview of the pop-up sale events where the empirical data has been collected and provides general background information of the subjects of the present multi-side study. It further shows that my sample has been limited to fashion brands, as the pop-up concept is most commonly used by fashion retailers.

Brand	Category	Pop-Up Type	Event Duration	Location	Retail Site	Observation Time
Armoire officielle	Women and Men's Apparel	Stock and Sample Sale	Three days, 3rd-5th March, 2016	Copenhagen K, DK	Company Office	One day, approx. 2h
BAUM UND PFERDGARTEN	Women's Apparel and Accessories	Stock Sale	Two days, 12th-13th March, 2016	Glostrup, DK	Warehouse	Two days, approx. 6h
GARDENIA COPENHAGEN SHOE BIZ COPENHAGEN	Women's Shoes	Stock Sale	Two days, 12th-13th March, 2016	Copenhagen N, DK	Nørrebro-hallen	Two days, approx. 3h
MADS NØRGAARD COPENHAGEN	Women, Men and Children's Apparel and Accessories	Stock, Sample and Second-Rate Quality	Five days, 30th March - 3rd April, 2016	Copenhagen N, DK	Nørrebro-hallen	Two days, approx. 5h
SOULLAND	Men's Apparel, Shoes and Accessories	Stock and Sample Sale	Four days, 31st March - 3rd April, 2016	Copenhagen V, DK	Empty store front	Three days, approx. 3h
MARC JACOBS STELLA McCARTNEY ISABEL MARANT	Women's Apparel, Shoes and Accessories	Stock Sale	Four days, 31st March - 3rd April, 2016	Copenhagen V, DK	Conference Center	One day, approx. 1,5h
WON HUNDRED	Women and Men's Apparel, Shoes and Accessories	Stock Sale	Four days, 7th-10th April, 2016	Copenhagen N, DK	Nørrebro-hallen	Two days, approx. 5h
BRUUNS BAZAAR COPENHAGEN	Women and Men's Apparel and Accessories	Stock Sale	Three days, 15th- 17th April, 2016	Glostrup, DK	Warehouse	One day, approx. 2,5h
envii	Women's Apparel and Accessories	Stock Sale	Four days, 28th April - 1st May	Copenhagen N, DK	Nørrebro-hallen	One day, approx. 2h
MOSS COPENHAGEN	Women's Apparel, Shoes and Accessories	Stock Sale and Second-Rate Quality	Long-term pop-up store, September 2015 - ongoing	Copenhagen K, DK	Empty store front	Five days, approx. 4,0h
Acne	Women and Men's Apparel, Shoes and Accessories	Show Samples, Recycled Pieces, Selected Items	One day, 21st May, 2016	Copenhagen N, DK	Acne Archive, the company's long-term outlet	One day, approx. 2h

Table 1: Overview of the Sites of Observation, Logo Sources: Each Retailer's Official Website.

4.2.3 Observation Strategy and Techniques

When entering the retail settings, I began my observations by exploring the retail setting as a whole and gained a first impression of the environment, the store's layout and its organization. In doing so, I walked through all areas and, if possible, followed the shopping trails. I paid attention to the product displays and presentations, the merchandise itself, and how it was staged. I also observed the retail settings' decoration, layouts, the furniture and all elements of the retailscapes. This observation technique is similar to what Fuentes (2011) calls 'grand tour observations'.

Fuentes (2011) further suggests the term 'consumer observations', which I also adapted for my study. During this type of observation where consumer behavior is in the center of attention, I followed shoppers through the retail site, observed what they did and listened to their conversations. Due to the language barrier, the last aspect was perceived as rather difficult, since there was only a minority of consumers speaking English.

Some retail environments offered seating facilities, where I could sit back and watch the happenings around me. Though, being an observer does not only include a certain sitting-back and watching of the activities which take place in front of the researcher (Crang & Cook, 2007), it can also include participatory aspects (Fuentes, 2011). While acting as a consumer myself, I engaged in the retail events by closely looking at the merchandise, and by browsing through the stores. In addition, I tried on various clothes myself, talked to staff members, sometimes even bought articles, and fully participated in the consumption activities carried out at the pop-up events. Acting as a shopper further made it possible to spend longsome time at the event, without standing out as a researcher.

This 'undercover' approach goes along with Elliot & Jankel-Elliot (2003) who claim that the ideal approach towards participant observations is to minimize the effect of the researcher on the subject of study, which simultaneously maximizes the depth of information obtained. Hence, acting as a member of the community and taking part in their activities instead of presenting myself as a researcher seemed suitable to "[…] not to alter the flow of the interaction unnaturally" (Adler & Adler, 1994, p. 380).

4.2.4 Data Recording Methods for Participant Observations

As indicated before, participant observation does not only involve gaining access to a community and immersing oneself in new social worlds, it also generates written accounts and descriptions (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2001) which provide the basis for the field work's analysis, and support the development of dense and rich narrations (Elliot & Jankel-Elliot, 2007). This goes along with Atkinson (1992) who characterizes ethnography as "[…] a double process of textual production and reproduction" (p. 5). In order to create these written accounts, researchers have to make every effort to record and capture the empirical data (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007).

According to Healy et al. (2007), there are numerous ethnographic tools available that ensure that the holistic experience is captured for analysis. With regard to this, Crang & Cook (2007)

mention tallies, drawings, photographs and other forms of material evidence that allow "[…] to maintain some form of dispassionate, scientific objectivity" (p. 37). Nevertheless, writing fieldnotes is the most common method to record observations (e.g. Atkinson, 1992; Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2001; Elliot & Jankel-Elliot, 2007).

Fieldnotes can be described as a form of representation and a way of reducing just-observed events, persons and places to written accounts. By reducing the entity and confusion of the social world to written words, fieldnotes (re-) constitute this world in a preserved form which can be reviewed, studied and thought about after the observation has taken place, and thus, can be consulted later on (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2001). As literature further claims, researchers often note brief reminders while still being in the field and write down key features of incidents or encounters which they regard as significant (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2001). By following this suggestion, I briefly wrote down what I witnessed while still being in the field. Especially in the stores where I was able to sit down for a while, I was able to immediately bring my observations to paper. In addition, I recorded several voice memos in which I described what happened around me. I found recording voice memos to be a fast and efficient way to capture my field observations, especially while simultaneously participating in the events as a shopper.

Besides these preliminary notes, Atkinson (1992) suggests to write substantial fieldnotes of what has been experienced in the field, including reflections, right after visiting the event. Such extensive fieldnotes were written every time after visiting a temporary store in a more quiet environment. Since this study involves multiple retail sites visited over the course of several weeks, these written accounts were essential for a detailed analysis afterwards.

As Atkinson (1992) notes, fieldnotes are inevitably selective and cannot provide a fully complete record. In order to overcome the issue of observing only what I believed was significant, and leaving out other matters, additional visual records were chosen as a second method to capture the observation data. This idea derives from Arnould & Wallendorf's (1994) statement, in which they claim that visual data can be extremely useful in developing interpretations of behavior, the temporal flow of events, culturally significant moments and human-object interactions. Including pictures in the analysis further enhances the descriptions of the pop-up venues, as the stores' retailscapes have been pointed out as a central element for answering the research questions. This argumentation is supported by Pink (2007) who argues that visual ethnographies are increasingly used by researchers and should be included in research studies when appropriate, and when no ethical concerns may prevent the researcher from doing so.

In total, I generated about 34 pages of fieldnotes, including transcriptions from my voice memos, and took more than 350 photos.

4.3   Ethnographic Interviews

Even though observations are a revealing method to answer my research questions to some extent, further information is required to gain a more in-depth understanding of the research area. As Healy et al. (2007) point out, being present at the actual setting makes it possible to see which expectations and beliefs consumers bring to the retail site, and how these views change during the consumption process. However, this is often difficult to observe. In addition, as Elliot & Jankel-Elliot (2003) point out, people do not always do as they say and vice-versa. Especially personal thoughts, or previous experiences and opinions cannot always be witnessed from an outstanding perspective. Crang & Cook (2007) agree upon this and claim that social research always "[…] involves learning through conversation" (p. 60).

Ethnographic interviews are such a form of conversation and help to gather rich, detailed data directly from participants in the social worlds under study (Sherman Heyl, 2001), and are further seen as "[…] a necessary component in developing an understanding of their situated behavior" (Elliot & Jankel-Elliot, 2003, p. 217).

Ethnographic interviews can be highly structured, semi-structured or relatively unstructured (Crang & Cook, 2007), but can also include rather informal chats which Elliot & Jankel-Elliot (2003) name 'casual conversations'. The following sections devote attention to casual conversations and semi-structured interviews in a more detailed manner, as both have been used as methods for collecting the empirical data for this study.

4.3.1   Informal Interviews at the Retail Sites

Informal interviews are technically no real interviews, and could be regarded as a part of observations. They are used to generate valuable information and represent "[…] much of the richest data which ethnography can capture" (Elliot & Jankel-Elliot, 2003, p. 217). Along with this, Agar (1996) states that such information arises from asking casual questions while 'hanging out' with the objects under study, and thus, stresses the informal characteristics of such a conversation once more. In addition, this technique is highly flexible and allows collecting experience-near information (Geertz, 1973).

The expression 'while hanging-out' as used by Agar (1996), illustrates the variety of situations in which this method can be applied. Therefore, informal chats were considered as a suitable technique to enrich the data from my in-store observations. Depending on the situation, I either introduced myself as a researcher, or began a short conversation as a shopper, to gain a better understanding of consumers' shopping practices and learn about their experiences.

As a matter of fact, during such a conversation the ethnographer does not have a written list of questions but rather has "[…] a repertoire of question-asking strategies to select from when the moment seems appropriate" (Elliot & Jankel-Elliot, 2003, p. 217). Hence, all questions I asked during my informal conversations with consumers came up spontaneously, while participating in the retail event.

My informal chats were rather short and never lasted longer than approximately five minutes. The information gathered from informal interviews includes catchy statements and snippets from conversation, as I did not record them. In total, the information from this interview strategy filled about five written pages.

4.3.2 Conducting Ethnographic Interviews

In contrast to informal chats, my semi-structured interviews required more previous preparation and planning. Generally speaking, interviews, like any other kind of social interaction, are shaped and structured by both, the researcher and the participant. As Hammersley & Atkinson (1995) further state, ethnographic researchers do not always decide beforehand which exact questions they are going to ask. Consequently, they do not always ask each informant the exact same questions. Instead of preparing a fixed list with interview questions, they develop a list with topics and issues they aim to address during the interview. This allows flexibility and leads to a reflexive conversation and supports the natural flow in the discussion (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995).

In line with this tradition, my interview technique did not include a fully pre-defined question catalogue. However, in accordance with Crang & Cook's (2007) practical advices on doing ethnographic interviews, I prepared a rough interview guide which included the most important topics, and along with this, some pre-defined questions which helped me to start the conversation (see appendix A). Likewise, these questions were found helpful to switch the topic or to lead the conversation into another direction. During the interviews I used both, non-directive questions to stimulate the respondents to talk about a particular broad area in a free and open manner, as well as directive questions. The latter made it possible to test out hypotheses emerging from my on-going interpretations, and to fill in certain information gaps (Elliot & Jankel-Elliot, 2003).

4.3.3 Sampling and Participant Selection Criteria for the Interviews

Similar to the choice of pop-up stores, also the interview participants were selected based on an availability sampling. The participants were recruited among the shoppers who were leaving the stores, directly in front of the retail venues. This method was chosen to encourage consumers to reconstruct the just lived experiences. The respondents were not selected based on any sort of criteria, besides the willingness to spend about 30-40 minutes of their time. When I mentioned how long such an interview might take, many consumers declined. This made it more complex to find participants. Finally, those who were willing to take part in my interviews and accepted to sit down for a more formal conversation, mostly had previous experiences with temporary sale events and demonstrated a certain sense of interest. In addition, since many shoppers came in a group of two or more, also pair interviews were conducted. As Hammersley & Atkinson (2007) point out, conversations in a pre-existing group are more forthcoming and less threatening for participants. Furthermore, group interviews reveal how informants work out their thoughts and feelings in a social context (Crang & Cook, 2007). Hence, another advantage of group conversations is the possibility to

discuss individual thoughts, by allowing other interviewees to comment, pick up or expand these thoughts.

I first of all planned to conduct all interviews in a quiet environment. However, this was not always possible. Especially at events that took place outside of the city center or even in industrial areas, it was not possible to find a spot to sit down. Therefore, some of the interviews took place directly in front of the store, and other interviews were conducted in cafés located close to the retail location.

Since the merchandise sold at the selected pop-up stores mainly targeted women, the majority of visitors were females. Therefore, it happened that also almost all respondents for the semi-structured interviews were women.

In total, twelve interviews were conducted, until the theoretical saturation was reached. According to Denzin & Lincoln (2005), in qualitative research this state is accomplished when the empirical data does no longer provide new and useful knowledge, and when there is no further variation in the respondents' answers.

From a CCT perspective, individual characteristics and their way of thinking and talking, play a considerable role in expressing and providing information about a topic (Askegaard & Linnet, 2005). Therefore, the following table initially presents a brief overview of the informants' backgrounds.

As further shown in the table, the interviews took between 21 and 47 minutes, depending on how much the participants were willing to share, and how much previous experience they were able to recall. All interviews were recorded and transcribed for the analysis.

Participant Name*	Gender	Age	Background	Length of Interview
Mary	Female	Mid-Twenties	Mary attended the Armoire Officielle sale and is a young professional in the insurance sector. She prefers high quality apparel and appreciates both, a clean style and organic materials.	40 min
Julie	Female	Early Twenties	Julie is a university student, currently enrolled in a Bachelor program, who heard about the Moss Copenhagen sale event from a friend. Living on a student budget, for her Moss Copenhagen is "most of the time very expensive and it is just a good opportunity for me to get some stuff that I really like for a good price".	47 min
Kristin	Female	Early Twenties	Kristin is currently doing her Bachelor and she has visited the Moss Copenhagen sale multiple times. Even though she likes retail spaces that inspire and show how to combine clothes, she does not care about aesthetics while shopping at sale events.	25 min

Hannah	Female	Mid-Twenties	Hannah, who works and lives close to the Moss Copenhagen outlet, enjoys visiting the store "a lot to check if they got new stuff out or something I like". Even though, she describes her wardrobe as "kinda full", she admits that especially discounts induce her to buy items by impulse.	31 min
Alana Hellen	Both Female	Mid-Twenties	Alana heard about the Baum & Pferdgarten sale on Facebook and invited her friend Hellen to join. Both women knew the brand before and had looked at the products on the website before attending. The friends visit sale events on a regular basis, as it is "a great thing to spend your Saturday together".	28 min
Janna Lisbet	Both Female	Mid-Twenties	Lisbet follows 'Fashion Facts' on Facebook to keep herself informed about upcoming sample sales and pop-up shops in Copenhagen. She asked her friend Janna to join, and was secretly hoping to take Janna's car to drive to the event. The two have been to other pop-up events before, as both are highly fashion-conscious shoppers. Especially Lisbet admits that she is always "up for a good hunt".	46 min
Anette Lovisa	Both Female	Mid-Thirties	Anette has been working in the fashion industry for many years and also sold Baum & Pferdgarten a couple of years ago. She and Lovisa generally enjoy shopping for exclusive brands and mention that those are usually "out of reach moneywise". The two friends are mothers of young children. Therefore they also look for pop-up sales for children's wear and sometimes buy clothes for their husbands, because "you can always sneak something in" their closets.	37 min
Per	Male	Mid-Twenties	Per is working as a marketing manager who enjoys buying high-qualitative clothes that match his style, but are not "mainstream" or ordinary. Brands are very important for him. When he likes a brand he tries to learn about it's background and wants to know what it stands for. He visits sale events to find bargains, but also expresses a critical view on the hype around them.	42 min
Henriette	Female	Mid-Twenties	Henriette is a post-graduate student form the UK and describes herself as a price conscious shopper. She states that she prefers waiting until a product is on sale, instead of paying the full price in the regular store. Comparing prices online and in-store is very important for her.	22 min

Andrea	Female	Early Thirties	Andrea is a mother of two children who visited the Gardenia sale event with her family. For her, visiting a pop-up sale on a Sunday is like a family excursion where you can "stop by while walking through the city". She admits that she loves shoes, especially when they are on sale, which is "typical for a woman". In order to find sale events, she checks promotional websites on a regular basis.	21 min
Merit Elin	Both Female	Mid-Thirties	Merit and Elin are colleagues that got to know each other during work and became friends. Both women enjoy shopping and finding good deals during sale events. They both claim to have attended many similar events and therefore are used to the circumstances and the store's features.	36 min
Camilla Christel	Both Female	Mid-Fourties	Camilla and Christel are women in their forties. Camilla, a housewife and mother of a daughter, has been shopping at pop-up sales for many years and she "got into it by recommendation years ago". The friends appreciate high quality Danish Design and the elegant style of Bruuns Bazaar.	35 min

Table 2: Participant Profiles, *All Names Changed.

4.4   Data Analysis

The initial task in analyzing qualitative data is to outline concepts which help to make sense of the cultural system under study documented by the material (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). However, according to Whitehead (2005), "[…] ethnography is a cyclic interactive process, wherein the ethnographer moves back and forth between observations, interviewing, and interpretation" (p. 9). In this sense, my analysis was an on going procedure throughout the whole data collection process, the formal analysis and the ethnographic writing. Therefore, in accordance with Hammersley & Atkinson (2007), my analysis cannot be seen as a fully separate stage of the research process, but rather as a connective proceeding.

The formal analysis is divided into two parts which helped me to organize the analytical process. The first one has been guided by the aim to find elements that are characteristic for pop-up sale events. Thus, I initially looked at how the stores are organized and how retailers use the retail spaces. In a second step, I examined how these characteristics are similar or different from how retail settings have been described and explained within the past CCT literature.

The second part of my analysis concentrates on consumer practices and their experiences within this space. This process has been based on the questions *"What do consumers do during sale events?", "How do they behave?"* and *"What is characteristic for this shopping experience and these practices?".* Once more, I looked how my findings in context to temporary stores correspond or differ from how shopping experiences have been described

and explained in previous research. With regard to the research question, I additionally looked how these experiences are connected to the retail space, and how the characteristics of the retail sites under study influence consumption behavior and shape individuals' shopping experiences.

In order to answer these questions and to develop the analysis, I repeatedly, carefully and critically read through my data, reconfigured it and looked for themes, patterns and repetitions. I used common coding techniques as suggested in ethnographic literature (e.g. Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Crang & Cook, 2007) to develop preliminary categories representing the characteristics of temporary stores and separated from this, consumer practices and experiences.

Followed by this, I further developed my categories by connecting and relating codes to final themes. Since my study has been marked as a multi-site study, I was able to compare and relate findings from different places and times in order to identify stable features. This process was accompanied by multiple re-readings, re-codings, and re-orderings of the whole research material.

However, the final themes do not only emerge from the empirical data. My analysis has been further influenced by both, the research questions, as well as by the theoretical framework as presented earlier. Therefore, outlined theory and pre-existing ideas were used as resources to make sense of the data (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007).

4.5   Ethnographic Writing

Ethnographic writing is closely related to the analysis and is therefore a key element of the entire research process (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Traditionally, ethnographic writing disclaims technical jargon and theoretical concepts and uses a descriptive and engaging writing style. The latter aims to 'pull the reader into the ethnography' and creates illustrative written accounts which bring the studied culture to life (Maanen, 2006; Fuentes, 2011). However, the ethnography presented in the following chapters does not abstain from the theoretical framework as presented earlier. Instead, the written accounts in this thesis are grounded in, and connected to the socio-cultural perspective on shopping experiences and their relation to retail space. In accordance with Hammersley & Atkinson (2007), it strives to archive a dynamic balance and constant interplay between the empirical and the theoretical.

In addition, the human dimension usually comes to the fore in ethnographic writing. This includes the members of a culture themselves, and their worldviews, doings, sayings and thinking (Fuentes, 2011). The present account adapts to this conventional way of writing ethnographies and provides both detailed descriptions, as well as interpretations while centering on the human dimension, but additionally focuses on the material and physical retail spaces.

4.6   Research Quality - Validity and Reliability

Reliability and validity are fundamental concerns in qualitative as well as quantitative research (May, 2010), as "[…] all scientific ways of knowing strive for authentic results" (LeCopte & Preissle Goetz, 1982, p. 31). Without any doubt, ethnographic research differs from positivistic research, and its contributions to scientific knowledge lie in these differences. Ethnography admits that all experiences of the researcher and the participants likewise, are highly subjective. Thus, ethnography provides a depth of understanding social phenomena, but may lack in other approaches to investigation (LeCopte & Preissle Goetz, 1982).

With regard to the application of ethnographic results and findings, Reichardt & Cook (1979) clarify that generalization can only be assured and legitimized where subjects have been sampled randomly from the entire population. I, as an ethnographer, do not have access to what LeCopte & Preissle Goetz (1982) refer to as necessary conditions for generalization.

Nevertheless, also in ethnography the credibility of the account, the transferability of the material, the dependability of the interpretation, and the conformability of the study are all suitable criteria to validate the truth claims of the research (Crang & Cook, 2007). As suggested by LeCopte & Preissle Goetz (1982), I aim for comparability and translatability of my findings in the first place, instead for complete transference to groups that have not been investigated. According to Wolcott (1973), comparability can be reached by making sure that the research includes descriptions of characteristics of the group studied (see table 2). These characteristics can serve as a basis for comparison with other like and unlike groups. As LeCopte & Preissle Goetz (1982) note, translatability "[...] assumes that research methods, analytic categories, and characteristics of phenomena and groups are identified so explicitly that comparisons can be conducted confidently" (p. 34). Warranting both, comparability and translatability sets the foundation upon which comparisons can be made.

One commonly accepted strategy to further address the research quality in ethnographic research is the triangulation strategy (e.g. Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; LeCopte & Preissle Goetz, 1982). Triangulation "[…] involves the comparison of data relating to the same phenomenon but deriving from different phases of the fieldwork, the temporal cycles of occurring in the setting, or the accounts of different participants differentially located in the setting" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 183). Instead of relying on a single set of data, I applied method triangulation by using different data collection techniques to examine the social phenomenon. However, as Hammersley & Atkinson (2007) note, it is not simply the combination of different methods per se which influences the research quality. Instead the attempt to relate various kinds of data in a way to counteract possible threats to the validity of the analysis is of importance. Hence, simply aggregating data from different sources is not sufficient to produce an accurate account. Also differences between sets of data have to be taken into account, as they can be as important, and as illuminating as the similarities.

In this thesis, participant observation and consumer interviews were used as the two main methods to generate empirical data. The observations were conducted first, in order to

develop a primary picture about the retail sites and consumers' behavior when visiting pop-up events. The interviews were used to further learn about shoppers' experiences, feelings and thoughts during their visits. This approach made it possible to directly ask consumers about certain observed phenomena during the personal interviews. Hence, participants were encouraged to express their experiences about my subjectively perceived observations. This form of 'member checks', as Crang & Cook (2007) refer to this procedure, further enhanced the participatory approach of my study.

However, as mentioned before, the analysis has been an on-going process throughout all research stages. Thus, even though my fieldwork always started with observations, I went back to the field once more after the interviews took place to further evaluate the empirical data gained from interviews during additional observations. This constant moving back and forth has been pointed out as an important aspect to prompt the research quality (Crang & Cook, 2007). Hence, I triangulated between both, different data sources, as well as different stages of the fieldwork.

4.7   Political and Ethical Considerations

Hammersley & Atkinson (2007) argue that ethical issues always apply in social research, but the characteristics of ethnography give them a distinct emphasis. In addition, research is always entangled with issues regarding power and knowledge, and is thus, inherently political (Crang & Cook, 2007).

The first issue which is relevant for the present research is that of informed consent, and therefore related to participant observations. There is no common agreement within the ethnographic literature, whether it is legitimate to observe members of a society without them being aware of this, or not. Whereat some authors argue that this method contravenes human rights, autonomy and dignity, other scholars argue that participant observations cannot be related to these concerns, as long as the research does not have any direct consequences for the subjects under study (Crang & Cook, 2007; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007).

Thus, in more sensitive settings, such as hospitals, or generally within the health care sector, scholars argue that informed consent is highly appropriate (e.g. Murphy & Dingwall, 2007). For example, Diamond (1992) who conducted hidden observations in nursing homes got dismissed after colleagues found out about his research project. He was not able to finish his fieldwork, as authorities claimed his procedure to be not ethically adequate.

In contrast to this, covert observations are found to be a commonly used method within consumer research in retail environments (e.g. Pettinger, 2005; Hollenbeck, Peters & Zinkhan, 2008).

Furthermore, the sites of observations for the present study were often large public spaces which were mostly crowded. Thus, a practical problem occurred. It would not have been possible to make my research explicit to all consumers present in the field. In addition, providing information about my research could have affected consumers' behavior, which in

turn could have led to invalid conclusions, an issue which has been already briefly addressed (Adler & Adler, 1994).

Nevertheless, in order to maintain ethical standards, I ensured that no detailed descriptions or personal information of participants are included in the analysis. In addition, no photographs of single persons were taken during the observations, in order to respect consumers' privacy. Further, the present ethnography does not involve any harm in form of damaging consequences for the people studied, nor for others.

As Hammersley & Atkinson (2007) further emphasize, some researchers claim that ethnographic studies involve the exploitation of those studied, as participants supply information, but do not receive anything in return. Therefore, it needs to be mentioned that participating in my interviews was completely voluntary. Participants were not constrained to provide information they did not feel comfortable with. In addition, following the suggestions of Crang & Cook (2007), it was my ambition to express the topic of the present study as accurate and transparent as possible prior to the interview. I ensured that the data collection is handled confidentially and participants were guaranteed anonymity throughout the entire process, from the raw material to the publication. All names are fictitious. Furthermore, all informants agreed to record the conversation.

5 POP-UP SALE EVENTS AS HYBRID RETAIL FORMATS BETWEEN SPECTACULAR AND ALTERNATIVE SPACE

Concordant with the research questions, the purpose of this chapter is to examine both, the retail environment at pop-up fashion sales, and consumer practices and experiences within this space. The following chapter shows, that pop-up sales highly differ from conventional pop-up stores, that are characterized by unique marketing environments, outstanding design and creativity (Kim et al., 2009) and have been previously described as glamorously decorated and especially beautiful venues (Holmgren & Olofsson, 2015). These conventional pop-up stores are often created with the main purpose to attract consumers who are seeking diverse and innovative experiences (Kim et al., 2009). Contrary to this, this chapter argues that temporary sale events share features of alternative retail spaces such as flea markets or car booth sales, where rummaging for finds and perceived disorder is highly anticipated. At the same time, it is shown that the venues under study enable consumer experiences and practices that have been previously discussed in connection spectacular consumption spaces. Hence, the following analysis shows that pop-up sales can be regarded as hybrid retail spaces which merge alternative spaces with spectacular experiences.

The analysis starts with an ethnographic narrative of the retail spaces in order to illustrate the organization of pop-up sales, and thus sheds light to the first research question. Further, consumer practices and experiences within this space are presented, which answers the second research issue. The identified topics help to group and understand the lived consumer experiences while participating in the events on a holistic level.

5.1 The Retail Spaces: Factory Outlet, Flea Market or Both?

The following sections illustrate that pop-up sales show characteristics of retail spaces that have been previously acknowledged as 'discount stores', 'off-price retailers' or 'factory outlets', and represent retail formats which vend seconds products, overproductions or merchandise from former collections (Parker et al., 2003; Joshi, 2003; Shergill & Chen, 2007). Indeed, the merchandise available at pop-up sale events is miscellaneous. Fashion brands use their pop-up sales to clear their stock and use the events to market items from previous collections. In addition, retailers are found to sell unique and single pieces, and thus, not all garments are available in all sizes and colors, and not always in a large quantity.

Even though the products at temporary sale events are new and not pre-owned, the following paragraphs portrait the retail spaces' close relation to alternative consumption spaces that are operated to sell second-hand or vintage products.

Four sub-themes are identified to provide a detailed account of the characteristics of the retail spaces at pop-up sale events.

5.1.1 Somewhere Out in Nowhere

According to Picot-Coupey (2013), choosing the right location for a pop-up store is an important element of retail marketing strategies. Nevertheless, opinions about how to define the best location for temporary retail spaces differ. In accordance with Doyle & Moore (2004) who claim that pop-up stores are often located in radical and little-known places, also the fields of observation for the present work were found to be located in rather unusual areas, located far from conventional high streets and shopping districts.

Figure 1: Entrance to the Baum & Pferdgarten Sale.

For example, Baum & Pferdgarten, an award-wining Danish brand which is known for its classic styles and avant-garde pieces, as well as Bruuns Bazaar, named as one of Scandinavia's absolute best designers, opened temporary stores in a storage building in the industrial area of Glostrup, a suburban area outside of Copenhagen. While walking towards the address, at first glance, nothing indicated a designer store to be located around. Whereat some pop-up sales were found to provide signs pointing towards the right direction or to the entrance of the temporary store (e.g. Marc Jacobs, Moss Copenhagen), the only hint to find the right property for the Baum & Pferdgarten and Bruuns Bazaar sale events was the constant flow of consumers, cheerfully carrying plain brown paper bags, all leaving from one large factory building. Already from across a likewise huge parking lot, surrounded by other plain factory buildings, one could catch a glimpse of an open rolling shutter which served as the entrance to the event. Closely next to it, a small printout attached to a white sign made consumers aware that they were close to a pop-up sample sale. When walking through the large gate, one had to pass a vestibule stacked with pallets, tall shelves and construction materials laying on the side, before proceeding to a huge storage hall, which was transformed into the temporary shop floor. Consumers describe this place as "not very charming" (Lisbet) and "very industrious" (Janna).

Figure 2: Hidden Location at the Armoire Officielle Event.

Similar to this venue, other brands turned their office spaces into a temporary store (e.g. Armoire Officielle), used empty storefronts in nightlife areas (e.g. Soulland) or conference and exhibition venues as temporary locations for their pop-up sale events (e.g. Marc Jacobs). Whereat Nørrebrohallen, a multi-purpose hall in the northwest of Copenhagen's city center, has been found to be a popular location for fashion retailers' pop-up sale events (e.g. Mads Nørgaard, Envii), all venues are perceived as "not the typical store locations" (Mary). This finding conforms to the stream of the academic literature about pop-up businesses which states that such facilities might appear unusual, but are highly innovative and outstanding at the same time (e.g. Niehm et al., 2007; Kim et al., 2010).

Yet, these location-based factors stand in a strong contrast to authors who claim that temporary stores are mainly located in fashionable and economically significant areas (e.g. Marciniak & Budnarowska, 2009; Russo Spena et al., 2012). Pop-up stores which focus on clearing or selling objectives clearly do not belong to this category. The locations of pop-up sale events highly differ from conventional fashion stores that intend to attract customers by their outer appearance and prestigious location. Such rather spectacular venues, mainly located on lively high streets or in upscale shopping districts, have been extensively discussed within the CCT literature, or as Fuentes (2013) claims, this stream of research "[…] is characterized by a preoccupation with large and spectacular retail sites" (p. 293). Previous research focusing on strategically located venues found that these retail environments serve as both, tourist attractions and magnets for locals, accessible for everyone (e.g. Peñaloza, 1999, Sherry et al., 2001; Borghini et al., 2009). In addition, previous research has acknowledged that the location of a retail venue can contribute to the understanding of the historical and cultural context of a brand (e.g. Hollenbeck, Peters & Zinkhan, 2008).

In contrast to this, the locations of pop-up sales have no connection to the brand heritage, their positioning or to their parent houses. Instead, the consumer interviews reveal that shoppers describe the stores' locations as "a pretty poor place" (Merit), "not comparable to the normal store" (Alana), and emphasize that the stores are often "very, very hidden and almost not possible to find" (Mary). Compared to conventional stores or shopping malls, pop-up sales can be regarded as alternative retail spaces, where the aspect of a hidden and less conventional place is important. According to Lisbet, a fashion conscious woman in her mid-twenties, it enhances the aspect of finding something special:

> *"It's out in nowhere! But there is something about coming to places like this that makes me feel like it's more of a find. Cause when you go to a store in the city, when it's in Copenhagen K, you also know that there will be at least ten times more people than there are here. And it's more spacious here. Yeah... of course it took a while to get here, but still, it's somehow something you won't do every day." (Lisbet)*

Similar to other participants, Lisbet does not appreciate the area itself. Thus, as the passage illustrates, she sees the advantages of the location outside of the city and is willing to accept traveling time in favor of having less other consumers around and a spacious, but different retail environment. My interviews recount that searching for the location and taking a longer trip to reach it is not only highly accepted, it makes the shopping trip to something special and extraordinary, yet adventurous. Regardless to the location, the success of these retail venues is visually evident due to the large number of shoppers visiting the retail events. This notion is shared by English (2011) who states that trying to find a hidden location is comparable to a treasure hunt which makes shopping to an event (the aspect of a treasure hunt is further discussed in section 5.2.2).

5.1.2 Functional Store Layout without Design Features

Besides the unusual locations, also the organization and the set-up of temporary retail spaces differ from conventional fashion stores in various ways. An example is the Armoire Officielle pop-up sale which has been mentioned earlier. Armoire Officielle is a contemporary fashion brand, characterized by effortless style and Nordic simplicity that has its routes in Denmark's capital. For this event customers had to walk into the basement of an apartment building to reach the company's small office. In order to create space for clothing racks, tables and a variety of items from their collection, the company removed large parts of the furniture and transformed the office space to a shop floor for the duration of a weekend. Even though the staff tried to cover some parts of the remaining furniture and their storage area with large dark pieces of fabric, one could still see big cardboard boxes filled with tangled hangers, plastic wrapping and clothes in the back of the store. On the white walls, as well as on the ceiling, large pipes and power lines were visible which created the impression of a functional storage room. Mary, a recent university graduate in her mid-twenties, describes her first impression when entering the retail space at Armoire Officielle as "cool, because it's different". At the same time she adds that the retail space and its layout look "really easy and simple", and "not special or fancy at all", which emphasizes the feeling of a unique consumption experience which differs from everyday shopping, once more.

The other venues appeared similar to this. At some places, the wall covering was chipped, damaged, or left without paint at all, leaving the plain concrete visible for everyone. Cables, fuse boxes, sockets and pipes were apparent. Empty hangers, carelessly tossed clothes, and wrapping materials were found lying on the floor and in the corners at almost all stores.

As this account illustrates, pop-up sales do not include any design aspects to their retail space. Instead, retailers take the empty space as it comes, whether it is a warehouse or an empty salesroom. Little or no changes are made to visually improve the retail space's attractiveness, or to create a store design. Display dummies, decoration and artifacts are rare. In addition, fitting rooms are nearly almost non-existent, or provisionally build from chipboard panels and cardboard. Thus, such retail environments are purely functional and characterized by simplicity and modesty.
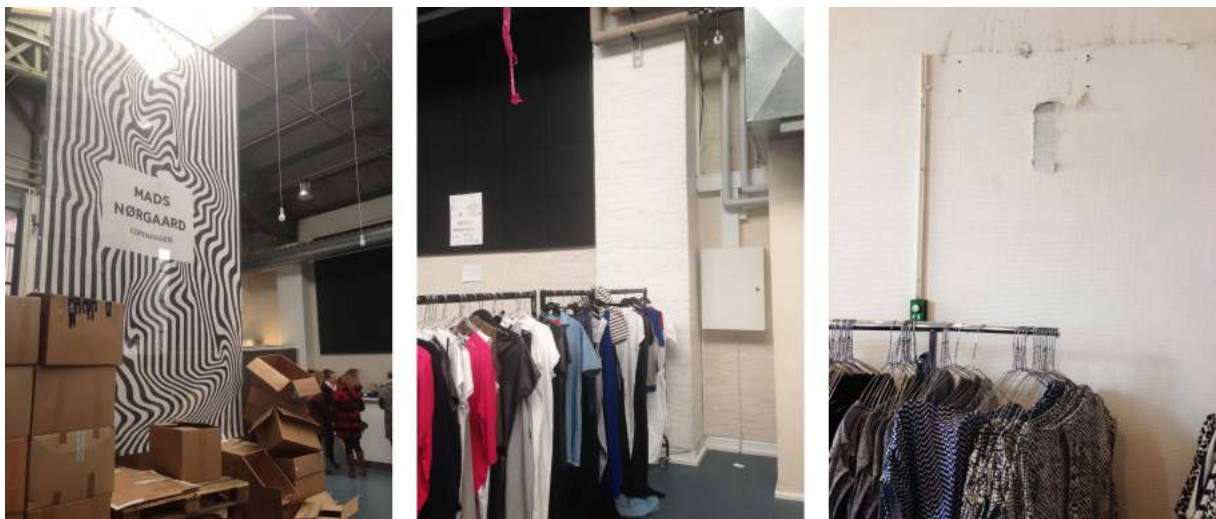

Figure 3: Impressions from three different Sale Events: Cardboard Boxes, Pipes and Chipped Wall Covering.

This finding portraits a relevant distinction to temporary stores used as experiential marketing tools. In contrast to previous research on pop-up retailing which emphasizes the importance of aesthetics, store design and the retail setting as a whole (e.g. Picot-Coupey, 2014; Pomodoro, 2013, Surchi, 2011), pop-up sales are neither glamorous, nor does their retail environment communicate a coherent visual brand identity. As Pomodoro (2013) points out, especially in fashion retail, the latter is seen as a crucial aspect to reach branding objectives. Pop-up sale events do not match these criteria and do not provide extraordinary and thoroughly styled retail spaces, and thus, embody a different type of retailing. As Crewe & Gregson (1998) stress, literature has tended to ignore such less spectacular everyday spaces and sees them as spatially, socially and economically marginal. As my findings reveal, the retail spaces of pop-up sales can be neither defined as 'themed retailing environments' (e.g. Kozinets et al., 2004), nor as 'brandscapes' (e.g. Sherry, 1998; Peñaloza, 1999). According to the academic literature, such conventional and highly spectacular retail spaces are stringently structured by marketers aiming to stage and manipulate consumer experiences (Sherry, 1989; Peñaloza, 1999; Belk, 2000). In addition, intentionally constructed environments use a variety of marketing tools including advertising, merchandising and entertainment in order to engage shoppers and to build relationships (Sherry, 1998). None of these tools are used during sale events. Instead, the mainly functional characteristics of the retail environments, along with their short-term existence, lead to the notion, that building or reinforcing the image of the brand is insignificant during sale events. Instead, the retail site is purely operated with the intention to vend products. This issue is further reflected in the product presentation, as illustrated in the following paragraphs.

5.1.3 Messy and Chaotic Product Presentation

The use of cardboard boxes and plastic containers for product presentations is a recurring element in transient retail spaces. Especially small items such as accessories, jewelry, underwear and swimwear are almost always placed in containers, or are directly left unpacked in the cardboard boxes in which they were delivered. Participants perceive this product presentation as "very simple" (Mary) and as "plain and nothing special" (Anette).

Besides presenting merchandise in boxes, all stores are equipped with clothing racks. Unlike in traditional fashion boutiques, items are put on different types of hangers, which creates an unusual mix of plastic, metal and wood on the clothing rails. Also racks and tables, which are often the only furniture elements within the whole retail environment, mostly do not match or look alike. It is not unusual to find unfolded merchandise simply lying on tables, sometimes organized by product category (e.g. Baum & Pferdgarten), size (e.g. Mads Nørgaard), color (e.g. Moss Copenhagen) or price (e.g. Won Hundred).

Figure 4: Typical Merchandise Presentation - A Rummage Table.

Shoppers perceive the product presentation as "very messy" (Camilla) or even "a total chaos" (Julie). The word "messy" was used by almost all informants during casual conversations, as well as during the personal interviews. Julie, a bachelor student in her early twenties, describes the temporal retail space at Moss Copenhagen, a brand positioned in the lower and middle price segment, as follows:

> *"It's not very cozy. And it felt like everyone just goes in, looks a little bit around, pulls out some stuff, makes a mess and then just goes. It's not the same shopping atmosphere that you would have when you go into the main store. It's rather cold, a little bit. And like I said, it's messy. Sometimes it's the total chaos!"* **What makes it that messy?** *"Well, it's just not neat and tidy there! Some things were lying over other things and you could not see everything. And some things were on the floor! And also the shoes! They were supposed to be in boxes but people pulled them out, and there was paper from the shoes literally everywhere. Yeah... it looked like nobody but them back..." (Julie)*

Judging from Julie's statement, the perception of a mess evokes from two aspects. On the one hand, the retail space itself, and along with that the presentation of the clothes creates a feeling of being in a messy place. On the other hand, consumers and their behavior are responsible for the perceived chaos. Both aspects are strengthened by the feeling that staff members are not able to handle the mess, as fast as it is being produced.

Figure 5: Impressions from three different Sale Events: Examples for Merchandise Presentations.

Researchers have broached the issue of a messy and disorganized retail space in connection to car boot sales (Gregson & Crewe, 1998; Crewe & Gregson, 1998) and flea markets (Sherry, 1990), both spaces which reflect alternative consumption sites. Gregson & Crewe's (1998) work shows that the disorder of the market place demands a certain preparedness for the unexpected while claiming that "car boot sales, then, are dirty, cluttered and unpredictable but as such are also exciting, challenging and fun" (p. 42). In compliance with these scholars, my findings show that consumers visiting pop-up sales anticipate a messy and chaotic retail space:

"I think it's fine. You know it's an outlet; it's not always here. You know it's gonna look messy. And you know they are not going to make it all pretty." (Hannah)

Likewise to Hannah, the majority of shoppers accepts the conditions of the marketplace which are perceived as naturally linked to informal and unfixed consumption spaces. In addition, both informal chats, and consumer interviews reveal that larger retail spaces counteract the impression of chaos and mess. As the following part of an interview illustrates, insufficient space enhances the chaos.

> *Lovisa: "It's mostly because you pretty much don't have any room to put your own clothes. Because you are afraid that someone would come and take it. Not customers, but the people working here when they are tiding up. So it would be nice to have that more organized. But on the other hand also customers are pretty messy!"*
> **So you say people take away clothes?**
> *Lovisa: "Yeah, we were trying on some clothes and one of the girls… I think her cardigan was taken by one of the employees. So she had to go and get it."*
> *Anette: "[laughs] Which can take a long time! Because again, unfortunately people just chuck things… Fortunately it wasn't Baum & Pferdgarten, but still! It was a Wolford cardigan that disappeared. But she found it!"*
> *Lovisa: "But yeah, she was in a bra so it's not nice to walk around like that [laughs]"*
> *(Anette & Lovisa)*

Once again, both shoppers do not appreciate the chaos, but tolerate the conditions. Also the role of staff is interesting here. Whereat employees at conventional retail stores represent and personalize a brand, and also function as brand experts who contribute to make the experience enjoyable (Hollenbeck, Peters & Zinkhan, 2008), staff members at pop-up sales have a clearly restricted area of responsibility. Instead of being involved in the process of sense making and identification with an organization, they are constantly busy with tidying up the retail space. Nevertheless, as the example above exemplifies, they contribute to the perceived chaos that is typical for these stores.

5.1.4 The Role of Social Space

Previous research has identified conventional retail venues as spaces for social interaction, and has depicted that enjoyment can evoke from simply spending time at the marketplace (e.g. Jackson & Holbrook, 1995; Bäckström, 2011). As the previous presentation of temporary retail sites illustrates, ephemeral stores do not necessarily invite shoppers to stay and to spend time at the venue. This, once again, stands in contrast to shopping malls, brand stores and other venues where the highly structured retail environment is an important part of the shopping experience (e.g. Peñaloza, 1999; Kozinets et al., 2004), or to spaces in which shoppers receive benefits from the interior milieu or the atmosphere of a store (Bäckström, 2011).

Nevertheless, even though pop-up sales are highly functional, they can include elements in their retail spaces that stimulate the social aspects of consumption. For example, Mads Nørgaard, a modern Danish fashion label, provided ping-pong tables and encouraged

consumers to take part in a tournament. During my observations, the table tennis area located in the very back of the retail space was occupied almost all the time. Right next to it, the company offered a painting corner for children with long benches and tables for recreation. In this area, children were also able to watch movies, and the brand also offered free popcorn.

Comparable to this, Soulland, a contemporary premium menswear brand, prepared seating facilities made of palettes outside of their temporary store and served reasonably priced beverages. Both elements influenced the shopping atmosphere, as Per, a young professional and brand admirer, describes:

> *"Its so relaxed and chilled. You just grab a drink and look for some cool stuff. It's more like hanging out."* **And what made it relaxed, or like you said 'chilled'?** *"I don't know, they had good music, good clothes. It was kinda full but people were really calm and it was... ehm... fun to check out the stuff they had." (Per)*

What Per calls 'hanging out' has been previously described as 'shopping as socializing', an activity in which social interaction is focal, and purchases become secondary (e.g. Bäckström, 2011; Bloch et al., 1989; Arnold & Reynolds, 2003).

However, it needs to be emphasized that at sale events, the consumption of the retail space and along with this the enjoyment of meeting or mingling with other consumers is seldom a primary activity. This finding is a noticeable contrast to Kim et al.'s (2009) idea of a conventional pop-up store, where the stimulation of social interaction and amusements is seen as crucial. Based on my empirical data, I found evidence that the products and the price are vital, and the main drivers why shoppers visit sale events.

As shown within these four sub-themes, the retailscapes at temporary sale events differ in many ways from conventional pop-up stores, and does not show any of the physical features which previous literature has declared as crucial factors of success (see chapter 2.2.1.2). Instead of being characterized by a 'designer appearance' (Picot-Coupey, 2013), or a precisely planned store concept which fits to the brand image, the retail space at pop-up sales is found to be unstructured and can be finally identified as a mix of different alternative retail spaces, such as factory outlets and flea markets. Therefore, the retail sites can be neither compared to every day retail formats such as chain stores or department stores, nor do they visually appear as brandstores, brand museums or themed retail environments, for instance. With regard to pop-up sales' distinct organizations, the next chapter focuses on how such hybrid retail space shapes consumption behavior and in-store experiences.

5.2 Consumer Practices and Experiences: Experiencing Retail Spectacles in Ordinary Spaces

In the following I provide insights on how shopping is practiced, and along with this experienced in a retail environment I previously described as a 'less formal' consumption space, and which is far from being a "[...] cutting-edge themed retail environment" (Kozinets et al., 2004, p. 659). As outlined within three overarching themes, these practices and experiences are highly influenced by the retail space and its organization on the one hand, and by the general characteristics of pop-up venues on the other one.

First of all, previous pop-up research has acknowledged that limited availability of products, and the limited time frame in which a store is available, influences consumption behavior and shopping experiences (e.g. Hurth & Krause, 2010; Catalano & Zorzetto, 2010). As shown within the following paragraphs, these aspects are also found to determine shopping experiences during sale events. However, also the low prices and significant discounts need to be taken into account. Instead of using individual price tags on each item, at pop-up sales, several signs spread within the retail spaces illustrate inclusive prices for merchandise categories. This general characteristic of the pop-ups under study illustrates its connection to factory sales once more, and goes along with Lombard's (2004) notion that such stores aim to market their products at the lowest prices possible. Prices are further presented as a significant aspect that influences shopping behavior and experiences.

Finally, as stated within the next sections, the features and characteristics of pop-up sales result in a rush and hype around these stores. This overall rush, and along with this feelings of excitement, entertainment and fun, are closely related to shopping experiences at spectacular venues. Shoppers' desire to participate in the events and their overall engagement and participation, has been previously investigated in context to highly structured and outstanding venues, and is similar to what CCT scholars refer to as 'retail spectacles' (e.g. Kozinets et al., 2004; Hollenbeck, Peters & Zinkhan, 2008). By emphasizing the link between cultural and economic realms, this chapter shows that also less spectacular consumption sites are places that stimulate consumer engagement, playful and ludic sensations, and "[...] the transformation of individuals to commodity-craving selves" (Gottdiener, 1997, p. 75).

5.2.1 Here Today, Gone Tomorrow - Desirability and Exclusivity

Whereat conventional retail spaces promote structures of common difference, connect local cultures and blend the lines between natives and tourists (Kozinets et al., 2004), pop-up sale events do not share this openness for everyone. As stated by the informants, visits are mainly planned beforehand, as it requires the knowledge where and when a sale event takes place, which in turn allows less flexibility.

By relying on word-of-mouth promotion, pop-up events keep its exclusive attributes by not communicating to a broad audience, but rather to a certain group of customers (Hurth & Krause, 2010). Informants visiting the sale events either stated that they heard about the particular store through social media, or that someone invited them to come along. Camilla, a

mother of a teenage daughter, describes her experience and the recent development of pop-up sales as follows:

> *"For many years back I was invited by a friend who works at Bruuns Bazaar. And then we were just in the mail list [...]. You know, in the beginning it was someone who knew someone. But now you can read about these lagersalgs at Facebook and all the places... So it's not a secret anymore. It really was at the beginning! And then it was much more, you know more people who know about it."* What do you think about this development? *"What should I say? Look around it's really crowded here."* **That sounds a bit negative?** *"I don't know… as long as there is enough [clothes] for everyone, it's ok. I don't mind. But yeah…[skeptical expression]."* (Camilla)

Whereat academic scholars emphasize the social aspects of themed or branded retail environments and stress that these venues serve as physical gathering places that connect brand enthusiasts and create bonds between shoppers (Hollenbeck, Peters & Zinkhan, 2008; Borghini et al., 2009), during sale events, such communal gatherings are temporal and short-lived. Consumers are connected by their passion for the brand and form ephemeral groups while participating in the event (Cova & Cova, 2002), which can be understood as temporary or momentary communities (Firat & Dholakia, 1998). As Camilla's statement reveals, the more consumers know about the event, the bigger the temporal community. Whereat Holmgren & Olofsson (2015) argue, that more conventional pop-up stores function as a meeting places which provide social settings for consumers with a common interest for certain brands, and facilitate social interaction, the presence of other consumers at sale events counteracts the feeling of talking part in something particularly exclusive. Following up on this, as expressed during the consumer interviews, the feeling of being part of something special, as well as the short-term availability of the stores, increases the desirability of the goods and the event itself.

This desirability becomes especially evident in the queues in front of some venues. An example is the first day at the Won Hundred pop-up sale at Nørrebrohallen. Won Hundred is a premium fashion brand, known for its effortless ready-to-wear collections influenced by Scandinavian style. Even before the event location opened their doors, shoppers were patiently waiting in line. During informal chats with individuals waiting in the queue, both, the excitement of being among the firsts to enter the store, but also the concern that 'the good stuff can be gone fast' were repeatedly expressed. This anxiety of being excluded or missing out has already been confirmed within the previous pop-up store literature (Catalano & Zorzetto, 2010), and shoppers lining up outside of stores has been acknowledged with regard to the anticipation of purchasing highly promoted items (Lennon, Johnson & Lee, 2011).

Several interviewees stated that they had previously experienced situations in which shoppers had to wait in a queue to enter a store. One of them is Lisbet, who shared her experiences during her shopping trips to two different stock sales during our interview:

"I went there [to a designer brand sale] when they opened and the line was around the building and I thought 'No, that's just crazy!' So I went home [laughs], watched a movie and then I went there again. No line!" **But have you ever stood in line as well?** *"Yeah! For other sample sales!"* **Which brand was it?** *"I did for Edith & Ella, it's a Danish brand. And I stood in line with other women for half an hour."* **And you would do it again?** *"I would! In a heartbeat! It was totally worth it. I got amazing stuff!"* (Lisbet)

Figure 6: Shoppers waiting in Line in front of the Acne Sale Event.

For Lisbet, waiting in line for a sale event is part of the experience and closely connected to the expected outcome of her shopping trip, and her anticipation for a brand. Her preparedness to invest her time illustrates that for her, the prospect of finding appealing clothes makes the wait worth it. Bäckström (2013) argues that the sensation of shopping experiences is highly depended on consumers aiming to balance of how much sacrifices they have to invest in it, in terms of money, energy and time. The main source customers spend while shopping at sale events is time, sometimes also waiting time. According to Kozinets (1999), it's the temporary features of retail events, and along with this, the scarcity in terms of product availability, which further enhance the attraction (Hurth & Krause, 2010).

By contrast, not everyone's concern matches this explanation. For instance, Per has a completely different attitude towards waiting in queues to be admitted to a sale event. For him, the aspect of crowded places influences his shopping experience in a negative way.

> *"[…] I don't wanna stand in line or wait 1,5 hours or something. That's something I would never do. I don't know… It's more like a happening. It has to be me and the fashion. I don't wanna be interrupted by other people. It's more about the brand! Sometimes I feel like people go there just to go. Like 'Oh, Wood Wood has a stock sale'. And if you go there and people see you and be like 'Look, he's going there'. Because Wood Wood is a brand which is really popular nowadays. So just people go there to show themselves. And then it's not being part of the fashion."* (Per)

As seen in this section, for Per, a rush on a pop-up sale disenchants the attraction. For him, sale events make a brand become more ordinary, which is perceived as a loss of exclusivity.

5.2.2 Let the Treasure Hunt Begin

Once shoppers enter a pop-up sale, the treasure hunt, defined as a game in which each player or team aims to be the first one to find something that has been hidden (Merriam-Webster, n.d.), begins. As this definition indicates, a treasure hunt involves a form of competition, as well as ludic and playful aspects. In addition, shopping as a form of hunting is founded in the aspiration or plan to find desirable objects, which represent the treasure (Bäckström, 2011), and thus, drive shoppers' motivation to participate.

Academic research has acknowledged the metaphor 'hunting' in connection to shopping practices such as leisure shopping (Bäckström, 2011) and collecting (Gregson & Crewe, 2003), as well as in context to specific retail spaces including vintage stores (Mackinney-Valentin, 2011), thrift shops (Bardhi, 2003) and car boot sales (Crewe & Gregson, 1998), for instance. In the following paragraphs it is argued that the theme 'treasure hunt' is also useful to illustrate consumer practices and experiences at temporary sale events. Due to its complexity, this theme is divided into three sub-themes, which represent and discuss the three main elements of a treasure hunt, as stated in the definition above. Nevertheless, it is further shown that the sub-themes are interconnected and all contribute to the overall experience of a treasure hunt.

The Competition and the Chase

As indicated before, pop-up fashion sales attract large amounts of shoppers which leads to a certain competition between consumers who all aim to find desired items and 'a good deal'. This does not only become evident due to shoppers' ambition to "go in the morning and be the first one" (Lisbet), but also with regard to their practices and behavior at the retail site. During my observations the retail venues were almost always crowded. Shoppers rummage through the items displayed in boxes, quickly flip through the hangers, and carelessly throw merchandise back if it is not appealing after having a closer look. Everything happens fast. Consumers often decide within seconds if they like something or not. Chasing "the good pieces" (Julie) and being among those who know where to look in the stores first, and how to distinguish 'trash from treasures' was expressed as being highly satisfactory. Similar to this finding, Schindler (1998) points out that such positive emotional consequences can result from senses of achievement, and further stresses their influence on a consumer's self-concept.

As two other respondents remark while talking about their previous experiences with pop-up sale events, this feeling of competing with other shoppers is characteristic of experiencing the hunt:

> *Lovisa: "Especially at some sales people are tripping over each other and almost fighting to find the size they need. That's not the case here luckily."*
> **Fighting?**
> *Lovisa: "Yes, it's really bad actually. Everybody just takes everything, like no one wants to share and rather keeps everything for themselves. Sometimes people just drag stuff from others to get it."*
> **Did you participate?**
> *Lovisa: "Nooo! It's just clothes! I use my anger on something else to be honest [laughs]!"*
> *Anette: "When it comes to that kind of Black Friday experience I'll back off. No!... Like, as you just said, it's just clothes, Jesus!" (Lovisa & Anette)*

Lovisa and Anette both take up to a critical opinion about this behavior and describe that for them, competing with other consumers is something they clearly avoid and condemn. However, shoppers carrying piles of clothes on one arm, using the other one to pick up even more clothes was observed as a common practice during sale events that leads to a "rushed

atmosphere" (Julie). In contrast to Lovisa's and Anette's statements, for other consumers, participating in a hunt arouses a feeling of excitement and thrill. Both sentiments are closely related to shopping as a form of adventure which has been identified as a central characteristic of leisure shopping (Bäckström, 2013). Lisbet who visited the Baum & Pferdgarten sample sale with her friend Janna, pictures the excitement as follows:

> *Lisbet: "I do a lot of sample sales. Especially when I was a student. [...] It feels a little like treasure hunting! You know that they have good stuff somewhere there, but you have to dig through a lot of different stuff. And that can take some time. But it's so exciting when you find that 'one' dress! And when you wear it afterwards it's all the more special cause you know what it costs originally and what you paid for it. For me it's… I don't know… It always makes me feel so happy [laughs]!"*
> *Janna: "Always in for a good hunt, huh [laughs]?"*
> *Lisbet: "Yeah!"*
> *Janna: "She is more like that... ehm… price convenient kind of girl. She's always excited to go to a sale. If the store is messy or the hours are like inappropriate, then I just pay full price. [Addressing Lisbet] But I think it's more like a kind of sport for you?"*
> *Lisbet: "Yeah it is!"*
> **Really a sport?**
> *Lisbet: "I love it! It's like I wanna win! I wanna find the great stuff. And I'm good at it [laughs]!"*

Shopping in the sense that it relates to the feeling of excitement and being in another world has been well established before (e.g. Lehtonen & Mäenpää, 1997; Peñaloza, 1999, Kozinets et al., 2004). The excitement of exploring the messy and unstructured marketplace in order to find a treasure, as Lisbet describes her experience, further relates to what Crewe & Gregson (2003) call "[...] browse and rummage for the unexpected" as an act of excitement (p. 42). Even though Lisbet enjoys looking for clothes in various places with a sense of dedication, also her eagerness becomes obvious. Thus, browsing and searching at sale events, which is seen as inevitable with regard to the stores' organizations, is not always primarily an activity shoppers undergo for the sake of it. Even though pop-up sales share many features in common with alternative consumption spaces such as flea markets or car boot sales, shopping at sale events is highly object-focused, which goes along with Bäckström's (2011) view of 'shopping as hunting', and the notion that the achievement of a certain goal is predominant (O'Donnell, Strebel & Mortimer, 2016).

Playing the Game: The Excitement, Pleasure and Disappointment of the Game
In addition to these considerations, Babin et al. (1994) claim, shoppers can experience a feeling of excitement even before they have made an actual purchase. This excitement arises from the anticipation of finding good deals and the desire to detect bargain offers. Thus, these authors point out that the experience of buying something on a perceived high discount can be more valuable for shoppers than the product itself. My findings support this argumentation. Even though making an actual purchase as an achievement has been found to be the core activity of shopping at pop-up sales, the actual act of finding this treasure that might be hidden within the largely unstructured space should not be disregarded.

In this sense, Janna's analogy between shopping and sports needs to be picked up again. Regarding shopping as a sport emphasizes both, the competitive and the playful characteristics of consumption practices. O'Donnell, Strebel & Mortimer (2016) suggest shopping as a sport to be mainly practiced for exceptional bargains on specifically desired items, which has been confirmed before.

In contrast to thrift shoppers who enjoy the fantasy aspects of hunting, and may practice bargain shopping out of economic necessity (Bardhi & Arnould, 2005), O'Donnell, Strebel & Mortimer (2016) suggest that sport shoppers strive to save the most on desired items, despite their economic resources. This does not mean that they aim to find the cheapest and to spend the least, but rather aspire to save the most. In the sport shopping context, satisfaction is achieved when the individual uses mastery and competence to successfully accomplish the goal. In addition, engagement in the game through effort, self-improvement, and the enjoyment of the process of bargain shopping as a whole, contributes to the overall experience (O'Donnell, Strebel & Mortimer, 2006; Bäckström, 2011; Cox, Cox & Anderson, 2005).

O'Donnell, Strebel & Mortimer (2016) further point out, shoppers tend to see themselves as competitive athletes in the retail environment who do not only anticipate the competition, but also obtain strong emotions from it. Pekrun (2006) claims, emotions generally play a central role in context of achievements. Especially competitive achievement domains such as sportive events or contests, involve triggers that are traditionally associated with highly emotional states, both of positive and negative nature (O'Donnell, Strebel & Mortimer, 2006).

Likewise to Lisbet who expresses her affinity to 'competing and winning' as something she 'loves', many others I spoke with articulated similar attractions and feelings of enjoyment and fun with regard to participating in the event and finding desired objects. Such ludic and playful components of consumption practices have been extensively discussed within previous research (e.g. Holbrook et al., 1984; Holt, 1995; Lehtonen & Mäenpää, 1997; Kozinets et al., 2004). Although, hedonic elements are claimed to be "[…] the essence of play and other leisure activities" (Holbrook et al. 1984, p. 729), not all shopping experiences are pleasurable. Not finding attractive items, or finding merchandise on a discount that is perceived as "still overpriced" (Anette), results in disappointment and equals losing the game or competition (O'Donnell, Strebel & Mortimer, 2006). Per has experienced such a failure and describes it as follows:

> *"Sometimes it's still too expensive! So there was that trench coat, the color was beautiful. But still too expensive. It was a thin trench coat and not a thick fabric. Rather for fall, not for the winter. So I felt like it was not worth the price… Maybe it was, but it was more than I could pay."* **How did it make you feel?** *"I mean, it's disappointing! Totally disappointing. I mean, most of the time I see the clothes just online and then you have the possibility to try them on and you really fall in love. I mean, you saw it on the Internet and already liked it there and I was wondering how it would look on me. But sometimes it just gives you a completely different feeling when you can put them on in the store. And they fit perfectly, or just look so good. And then when you see it's on sale but you can still not afford it. Then you feel like you came and expected so much but get disappointed in the end."* (Per)

At this occasion, Per finds himself in a state where delight and disappointment are closely connected. As Bäckström (2013) points out, consumers create mental images of aspired goods, which is similar to what Campbell (1997) calls 'self-illusory hedonism'. Campbell (1997) further explains that shoppers use their imagination and creativity to construct these mental images of desired objects, which results in a specific pleasure consumers experience while dreaming about it. Thus, expectations and excitement already arise beforehand (Campbell, 1997). The issue of finding a discrepancy between dream and reality leads to moments of frustration and disillusionment (Bäckström, 2011). The existence of both, highly satisfactory and disappointing experiences in shopping situations leads back to the multifaceted characteristics of shopping activities as discussed before.

The Objects of Desire: Treasures and Bargains
In this study respondents report that the treasure, as the object of desire and therefore the desired outcome of their hunt, can be either something known and specific, or any appealing item, similar to an unexpected discovery (Crewe & Gregson, 2003). Or, as one of my respondents remarks, shopping trips can involve both types of findings:

> *"I bought two shirts. Both… ehm… I saw them online on their website and thought 'Oh I hope I'll find them'. And I found them! So I was 'Yeah'! I'm really happy with that. And that, that's just an impulse… ehm… impulse purchase [pulls out little clutch bag]. But it's super cute, isn't it?" (Alana)*

Likewise to Alana, other interviewees recalled similar situations in which they explicitly searched for certain goods they had previously either seen on the retailer's web page, or in the stationary store. Such purchases are planned, evoke expectations, and are characterized by aspiration and desire (Bäckström, 2013). Individuals looking for specific clothes or accessories in pop-up sales demonstrate knowledge about original retail prices and therefore have specific expectations about their personal treasures, which corresponds with O'Donnell, Strebel & Mortimer's (2016) findings.

By contrast to this, purchases in pop-up stores can be also spontaneous and unexpected, as the following excerpt of my fieldnotes illustrates:

> *"Within the retail environment at the Won Hundred sale, the brand staged a small, differentiated area with a separate checkout where any item was sold for 50 DKK. Two young women were rummaging around the large piles of clothes that were placed on tables and in boxes under the tables. A staff member came and informed them that filling up a large plastic bag with as many items as would fit in it, was available for 500 DKK. One of them did not hesitate, accepted this offer and immediately put the things she was already carrying in the bag. The two women left the area with a completely filled bag, packed with a variety of clothes. During a short conversation one of them told me she found a jacket with a price tag stating the original price of 1600 DKK and cheerfully claimed that it is 'a fraction for such an amazing piece and expensive brand'. She also admitted that she took two of them, just because 'the deal was so great' and further expressed her excitement and delight". (Fieldnote, Won Hundred pop-up sale, Nørrebrohallen)*

Within the academic literature, such consumption activities driven by discounts or promotions are regarded as rather mechanical consumption types. Especially buying multiple items is, according to Thompson, Pollio & Locander (1994), a typical heuristic for price-driven consumption. Hence, purchases which are made "[…] simply because the price is right" are often associated with rational behavior (Douglas, 1996, p. 78), and impulse purchases (Kottler & Armstrong, 2010). As shown in my example, the price of 50 DKK was perceived as a 'great deal' and thus, was discerned as an outstanding bargain.

Cox, Cox & Anderson (2005) view bargain shopping, or as they claim 'bargain hunting', as a critical source of shopping enjoyment. With regard to the latter, Babin et al. (1994) speak of individual 'bargain perceptions' which indicates a certain sense of subjectivity. According to Bäckström (2013), especially positive experiences can arise when a consumer purchases products for a price that they interpret to be lower than they are actually worth, which equals "[…] the difference between a product's selling price and a consumer's internal reference price" (Babin et al., 1994, p. 647). In addition, in these situations consumers often feel proud, smart, or competent (Holbrook et al., 1984). All these emotions can be categorized as smart-shopper feelings (Schindler, 1998). As shown before, these feelings of accomplishment are further enhanced when shoppers demonstrate bargain hunting skills in a setting, where the bargain is not obviously presented, but requires rummaging and searching.

5.2.3 Take it Now or Never - Perishability and Scarcity

As indicated in the beginning of the analysis, the merchandise available at pop-up sale events is diverse and not all clothes are available in all sizes, variations and in large amounts. As shown in the following paragraphs, this limited availability of both, the merchandise and the stores themselves, shape consumers' shopping practices and experiences. To begin with, the perceived scarcity leads to the phenomenon of in-store hoarding which is the first sub-theme discussed in this chapter. Furthermore, due to the perishability of the retail environments most retailers do not offer fitting rooms where shoppers can inspect and try on their objects of desire. This characteristic is further examined in the second sub-theme. Finally both aspects lead to consumers' longing to balance perceived risks and profits, which the notion of 'take it now or never' brings along.

In-Store Hoarding

A commonly observed phenomenon is what Lisbet describes as being a "hoarder" during our interview. Once visitors find something they are interested in, they immediately retrain it and take care to not lose it again, because "once you put it away for a sec, someone else could take it away immediately" (Janna). Shoppers were found to carry large piles of clothes on their arms while walking through the whole retail site, a behavior which corresponds to what the academic literature calls 'in-store hoarding'. This term was initially introduced by Byun & Sternquist (2008) who define this practice as taking possession of an item and keeping it while shopping, although one is not sure whether to buy it or not. According to the authors, the retail atmosphere highly affects this behavior by "[…] urging consumers to take immediate action to grab an item before it is no longer available" (Byun & Sternquist, 2011, p. 188).

At pop-up sale events, the reasons for in-store hoarding are twofold. On the one hand the perceived competition in form of other individuals, all chasing objects of desire, leads to the urge for immediate ownership. In accordance with Byun & Sternquist (2008), this consumer reaction is driven by the predicted shortage of the goods and the perceived uncertainty of product availability:

> Alana: "[…] I think people get a bit selfish."
> **Selfish?**
> Alana: "Ja, they push a bit and they don't even smile when they do it. They don't say sorry or something."
> Hellen: "They just grab everything!"
> Alana: "Yes, they just grab stuff and carry it around. Like a pile of clothes! And I think you can't leave the stuff you want to buy because then someone else will take it."
> Hellen: "Yes, when you put it to the side for a bit someone takes it."
> Alana: "I think you have it on you, and carry it the whole time."
> Hellen: "Sometimes more you need! It's a bit annoying but what can you do? There are so many people and they can get really crazy sometimes." (Alana & Hellen)

Besides this short come, immediate action is also related to the store organization and the merchandise presentation. As pointed out earlier, the retail space at fashion sale events has been characterized as messy and chaotic. With regard to this, consumers also expressed their concern to not find items again within the plethora of merchandise, once they put it aside.

Further, I found evidence that some shoppers react to this competition by making up their own strategies, taking in-store-hoarding to another level:

> "Oh, and they [other consumers] brought IKEA bags and when I saw that I was 'Oh, I'll remember that for next time' because you're carrying around so much stuff that it's… You have to make it easier for yourself." (Lisbet)

Here, consumers demonstrate what scholars refer to as 'high task involvement' (O'Donnell, Strebel & Mortimer, 2016). Some shoppers are well prepared and are willing to put additional effort in reaching their aim. In the example, bringing IKEA bags to the event represents an additional effort. Such bags are robust, large storage bags that can be carried over one's shoulder. As O'Donnell, Strebel & Mortimer (2016) claim, exerting maximum effort increases an individual's level of mastery, a behavior that is closely related to shopping as a sport and smart-shopper feelings. Hence, using means for being able to carry more, leads to a more convenient shopping experience and helps to encounter the perceived shortage and competition.

Figure 7: Empty Clothing Racks as Examples for Product Scarcity.

No Fitting Room? No Problem!

The phenomenon of in-store hoarding is further linked to the issue of missing fitting rooms, a characteristic of pop-up sales which has been briefly addressed before. The academic literature agrees upon the notion, that fitting rooms play a vital role at fashion retail stores (e.g. Kim & Kim, 2015; Yun, Jung & Choo, 2015).

As Yun, Jung & Choo (2015) point out, fitting rooms are places where shoppers can inspect and try on merchandise without experiencing burdensome to buy something, and without feeling conscious of other people. Thus, changing rooms provide shoppers a space for privacy and are, as Siben (1991) notes, associated with customer satisfaction.

At pop-up events, I found shoppers who were collecting and hoarding apparel to try on all merchandise at once, as soon as they found a space to do so. For example, during my observations I found many consumers circuiting around the few mirrors available. Others searched for less crowded spots where they placed all clothes on the floor and tried them on, regardless the fact that other shoppers were always around. One of them is Kristin, a young undergraduate student, who shared her way of trying on clothes during our interview:

"I just put myself in a corner [laughs] and cover myself a little bit and then I try it." **Okay, seems like that's no big deal for you?** *"No, not really. Not for me because I'm not sooo shy. But I can imagine that someone else wouldn't like it…. But I liked the clothes and I prefer to quickly try them on before I buy. So I just put on a few sweaters and shirts. And for the shorts I just put them over my trousers. Yes, that worked really well and… yes, it was not a big problem."* **But would you still prefer a dressing room?** *"Yes, of course. But they should have more mirrors there. The problem was that they didn't have enough mirrors. I think there were only two in the store. So there was always someone standing and waiting. So it took a bit longer. And I was not so sure with one shirt. It was a bit big and I didn't feel like I had much time to consider."* *(Kristin)*

Figure 8: No Fitting Room? No Problem!

Similar to Kristin who develops her own strategy for trying on clothes, some shoppers are well prepared for this situation. Interviewees stated that they explicitly choose an outfit that can be easily taken off, and pick underwear which they feel comfortable to be seen by others. This finding is coherent with O'Donnell, Strebel & Mortimer (2016) who also found shoppers to wear the correct clothes to feel unobstructed. Hence, even though the majority of shoppers claim to prefer fitting rooms, during sale events consumers do not experience changing in front of others as something intimidating. Instead, my findings show that even though individuals perceive this way of trying on clothes as different from what they are used to, changing in front of other shoppers is not seen as a problem. It is rather perceived as nothing unusual in pop-up environments and thus, is seen as part of the experience.

As the following statement illustrates, consumers lay aside their sense of shame which has been acknowledged as a natural emotion, shaped by an individual's cultural background (e.g. Isenberg, 1949).

"I don't care about that! If there was a lot of guys I probably wouldn't like it that much. But on the other hand I'm like 'Whatever'... There is nothing to see! Not that they haven't seen from their girls!" (Anette)

However, judging from the participants' statements, shoppers do not change patiently or in a very calm manner. Similar to Kristin who expresses a feeling of being in a rush when trying on merchandise, other shoppers confirmed this pressure of making fast decisions. This detection matches the generally fast pace of shopping practices that consumers experience during sale events.

Figure 9: A Communal Changing Area.

Balancing Risk and Profit

In contrast to the previous considerations, some shoppers express a high level of misgiving with regard to fitting apparel in communal changing areas or elsewhere within the public facilities. Even though shoppers voiced this opinion, renouncing to try on clothes does not always influence their purchasing decision. For example, Hannah who bought a couple of shirts at Moss Copenhagen claims that she did not try on any of the clothes she found. Even though she is certain that the clothes will fit her, she simultaneously addresses the risk which goes along with buying something without trying it on:

> *"There is one thing where I'm a bit uncertain about. But that's because I haven't tried that kind of cut before. But as I know the brand and I know my sizes I'll just hope that it will fit."* **But do you know that you cannot return the stuff you bought here?** *"Oh yeah, I know that, it's an outlet! But I really liked it [the shirt], it's super pretty. So I thought 'Well, when it's just 100 crowns I will just give it a shot'. Cause it's that kind of neoprene fabric, it looks really good. If you can get a shirt for 100 and it's like 300 or 400 at the store... So yeah, it's really fine." (Hannah)*

Similar to Hannah who is prepared to take the risk that her shirt might not fit in favor of paying less, Julie recounts that she found a coat that was not her size and had a small hole in the inner lining at the same sale event. Since she liked the style and the price was perceived as "almost nothing", she decided to buy it and stich the lining at home. As these two examples illustrate, shopping at sale events is characterized by an inherent risk caused by the limited possibilities to fit the merchandise, and the general decline of returns on the part of the retailers. Crewe & Gregson (1998) portray similar findings with regard to shopping at car

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boot sales. The authors claim that lower prices compared to the original retail price are seen as an "[...] acknowledgement of the work, time and effort which may be required to clean, repair or restore the commodity" (p. 46). In accordance with this, shoppers at sale events are willing to bear a certain risk and eventually invest additional resources to fix or adjust clothes, in favor for a low price and the experience of excitement, and anticipation of trying on items later at home.

The tradeoff between 'what consumers give' and 'what they receive' has been previously discussed by Bäckström (2013). Her study shows that the act of balancing risk and profit influences consumers' enjoyment and how they pursue shopping. In addition, Bäckström (2013) claims that under certain circumstances shoppers are willing to give more. For shoppers visiting sale events this implies in the functional, yet scanty retail environment and the sense of risk as described before. However, as shown within the analysis, what Bäckström (2013) calls 'giving more' further includes the waiting time to get into a store, as well as the perceived competition caused by crowded venues, and the run on items by shoppers' commonly shared desire to find a bargain. Even though all these practices seem to have a negative connotation at the first glance, they were found to all contribute to experiencing a retail spectacle in an ordinary setting.

Even though the three consumption themes have been presented separated from each other as they discussed different issues, it is crucial to note that they are all connected through the characteristics of the retail site. In accordance with previous studies in the field of socio-cultural retailing, the retail space at pop-up sales serves as what Arnould & Thompson (2005) call an arena that offers multiple tangible and intangible resources, that shoppers consume for the creation of experiences, and whose qualities enable consumer engagement and cultural meanings (Peñaloza, 1999). This overall connection of the empirical findings is particularly discussed within the next chapter.

6 CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

The purpose of this thesis was to contribute to our understanding of contemporary consumption in context to pop-up stores, as an emerging retail format, established to meet the postmodern shoppers' demands, who have been characterized as being always on the move, driven by the urge to live euphoric moments, and the desire to discover new ephemeral experiences. Due to the pop-up concept's relatively young age, this retail format has not been extensively researched yet.

Therefore, the present study aimed to contribute to the understanding of a sub-category of this store type that I refer to as 'pop-up sales', which has been mainly neglected within the previous pop-up literature (e.g. Niehm et al., 2007; Kim et al., 2009; Russo Spena et al., 2012; de Lassus & Freire, 2013; Picot-Coupey, 2014).

In addition, it aimed to contribute to the emerging field of socio-cultural retail research (e.g. Fuentes, 2012; Fuentes & Hagberg, 2013). In doing so it explored consumer practices and experiences in relation to retail space through a CCT perspective, while highlighting the cultural and social complexities of consumption. In order to derive sufficient results, the research issue has been investigated through a multi-site study, using multiple ethnographic methods.

This final chapter is dedicated to the results of the empirical analysis that are now condensed by synthesizing the findings from the study, and by providing answers to the individual research questions. In doing so, the following sections make distinct connections to the theoretical framework. In response to the growing significance of the pop-up concept for retailers, practical implications are discussed. Followed by this, the findings are discussed in a broader theoretical argumentation, by depicting the societal relevance of the study. Along with this, critical reflections are brought up. The chapter is complemented with limitations and future research opportunities.

6.1 Synthesis of the Empirical Findings

The following sections pick up the previously set research questions once more. The answers to these questions represent the main findings from the analysis of my empirical data.

> *RQ1: How are pop-up sales organized?*

The spacial conditions of pop-up sales have been presented as being relatively unstructured, modest, as well as scanty, and therefore as highly functional. In addition, it was argued that the retail space is characterized by chaos and messiness. It was also found that the stores' overall organizations, including their locations, the store layouts, design features, product presentation and the role of staff and social space, differ from conventional pop-up stores. The retail spaces as a whole were found to join elements of alternative retail spaces such as car boot sales or flea markets, and include features of factory outlets and off-price retail stores.

First of all, these findings represent novel features of pop-up stores that have not been acknowledged within previous research on this retail format. Therefore, I identified a different type of pop-up store which, with regard to its spatial organization, differs in many aspects from the conventional understanding of pop-up venues. Former research on temporary retail sites has focused on highly structured and well-planned pop-up businesses, where staging and 'selling' brand-conform experiences are seen as key aspects. With regard to the latter, Surchi (2010) claims that such targets are given higher priority than direct sales objectives, while stressing communication goals to be the 'real objectives'. The same author further states that pop-up retailers primarily strive to simply reach the break-even point. Baumgarth & Kastner (2012) contribute to this discussion and argue that selling intentions are rather short-term oriented and therefore usually serve as secondary objectives for pop-up retailers.

The present study has refuted this narrow definition and has portrayed pop-up stores with mainly economic targets. Thus, it was shown that the stores' organization has been constructed to primarily vend products.

Generally speaking, not only the contemporary pop-up literature, but also CCT scholars have tended to ignore such alternative venues. This becomes obvious when looking at the large number of studies which center on spectacular and outstanding retail spaces, known as brandstores (e.g. Kozinets et al.) or brandscapes (e.g. Sherry, 1996), for example. However, as clarified within the next section, also less structured, and less aesthetically appealing spaces create experiences and enable consumption practices. Thus, it was argued that pop-up sales do not enable these experiences *despite* their simple organization, but *especially because* of their distinct features.

> *RQ 2: How does the temporary retail space at pop-up sales drive different forms of consumption practices and shopping experiences?*

The present work has further enriched our knowledge of how consumers engage in pop-up sale events. At the same time it revealed the diverse character of the practices and underlying experiences constructed by the typical pop-up features (e.g. limited product availability, temporal availability, exclusivity), in combination with the temporary venues' spatial organization.

Within the analysis three themes ('Today Here, Tomorrow Gone', 'Let the Treasure Hunt Begin' and 'Take it Now or Never') were suggested, and fully developed, in order to understand consumers' multiple and diverse activities while participating in temporary sale events. These practices which have been specified as queuing in front of the venue, rummaging for bargains, competing for merchandise or in-store hoarding, just to name some examples, were all found to be facilitated through the engaging qualities of the retail space and consumers' willingness to participate. Such engaging qualities of retail settings have been already recognized within previous socio-cultural research (e.g. Peñaloza, 1999; Kozinets et al., 2002; Healy et al., 2007). Therefore the findings correspond with the stream of literature that has illuminated the dynamic relationship between consumer behavior, the market place and cultural meanings (Arnould & Thompson, 2005).

As shown within the course of the analysis, consumer experiences at pop-up sales are manifold and diverse, comprise contrasting feelings and thoughts, and are shaped and framed by individuals' social and cultural backgrounds. In accordance with other socio-cultural scholars, my study provides insights about the subjective sensations and intrinsic processes related to consumption processes. For example, it was argued that consumption experiences at pop-up sales include sentiments such as excitement, anticipation, pleasure, delight and disappointment. In addition it was shown that shopping at sale events is perceived as unpredictable and challenging, and includes entertaining and fun, but also relaxing aspects. This notion of consumption experiences goes along with previous studies in the field of socio-cultural retailing which has already shown the variety of sentiments and their sometimes even conflicting characteristics (e.g. Miller et al., 1998; Bäckström, 2011; Bäckström, 2013).

Finally, it can be argued that the present study provides new insights about retail space. Whereat previous socio-cultural studies have focused on retail formats embossed by *either* spectacular and outstanding features (e.g. Peñaloza, 1999; Sherry et al., 2001; Kozintes et al., 2002; Borghini et al., 2009), *or* have concentrated on alternative retail space (e.g. Sherry, 1990; Crewe & Gregson, 1998; Gregson & Crewe, 1998; Gregson & Crewe, 2003) this paper contributes to our understanding of a hybrid retail format. It has been illustrated that typical pop-up features, along with characteristics of an alternative retail space work together, and lead to the creation of spectacular experiences and consumption practices that have been formerly purely associated with retail spectacles (e.g. Gottdiener, 1997; Peñaloza, 199; Kozinets et al., 2004; Sherry et al., 2001), but not in context of alternative retail space.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the unstructured and functional retail environment does not only enable experiences and practices that have been already recognized as interwoven with alternative consumption spaces, including enjoyment from rummaging or browsing, and the excitement of searching for a bargain, for example (e.g. Sherry, 1990; Crewe & Gregson, 1998). The analysis has further shown that shopping at pop-up sales involves the excitement of being in the marketplace, a certain rush or hype when a store opens, ludic and playful aspects, as well as high involvement and engagement while participating in the retail experience. Hence, it was found that the modest retail space does not hinder these experiences. Instead, in the first place, the messy, chaotic and congested space initially enables and reinforces them.

To finish, the findings and the analysis have shown that pop-up sale events can be regarded as hybrid retail spaces which are characterized by the features of alternative consumption environments, but which enable experiences and practices that are usually lived in thoroughly planned and spectacular retail environments.

6.2   Managerial Implications

Since operating pop-up stores is a growing retail marketing strategy, which is not only relevant for fashion retailers, but also for a variety of other venues (Surchi, 2011), the results from the gathered data might be interesting for any company that aims to integrate temporary store concepts to their channel strategy. Therefore some findings may serve as guidance for the planning and implementation process for future pop-up businesses, but especially for those that aim to realize selling objectives through this specific retail format.

To begin with, in accordance with previous research the present study has shown that finding an interesting and outstanding location is important, as it enhances consumers' feeling of participating in something special and exclusive. Therefore, pop-up sales should intentionally not be located in pedestrian areas or on high streets. Instead, discovering something hidden, and investing additional effort to find the location, is perceived as an achievement and enhances the feeling of experiencing something different and unusual. Furthermore, shoppers expressed a favor for having sufficient space, and thus, it is advisable to choose large venues, to avoid overcrowding.

Furthermore, the study has shown that functional retail spaces enable distinct practices and evoke particular consumer experiences retailers should be aware of. However, pop-up stores that concentrate on distinct selling strategies do not need to be highly structured and extensively planned. In these settings, design aspects and aesthetics were perceived as minor, as shoppers do not expect the same store features as within the parent house of a brand. The consumption of retail atmospherics was found to be mainly irrelevant, since shoppers visit sale events with purchasing intentions and are to a large extend object-focused. Therefore, retailers do not necessarily need to take additional effort to create a temporal store design or visually enhance the retail venue, which in turn, saves costs. However, social space or areas for play and recreation can thoroughly influence consumption experiences and further enhance consumer interaction and the overall time spend at the store. Most importantly, retailers should equip their retail spaces with mirrors and simple fitting room solutions. Even though having no fitting rooms is part of the overall experience, the findings indicate that shoppers prefer privacy, since not all shoppers feel comfortable in communal changing areas.

The merchandise presentation with rummage tables or boxes results in a highly anticipated flea market atmosphere, and encourages shoppers to look around and browse for bargains. However, since the outcome of a shopping trip matters, retailers should categorize merchandise by size, style or price to help consumers orientate, save time and to improve the overall experience. This aspect is also relevant as some shoppers inform themselves about the brand's collections or products online, and therefore have specific and clear ideas of the items they aim to find. In addition, it is advisable to recruit a sufficient number of sales associates who help to reorder the merchandise, counteract the chaos, and manage possible congestion.

6.3 Societal Implications

The present study serves as an example for the ongoing development of liquid retailing and marketplace transformations, as it reflects the socio-cultural dynamics taking place in a fluid retail space which is characterized by flexibility, volatility and instability (de Kervenoael, Bajde & Schwob, 2015). Whereat traditionally retail spaces were stable and solid, the development of short-lived pop-up stores is a reaction to the postmodern society's demands and desires. As already discussed briefly in the introduction, our contemporary culture and along with this, recently evolved lifestyles, are shaped by experiences, transience and immediacy (Pomodoro, 2013).

In this sense, Bauman's (2000 & 2007) idea of 'liquid modernity' needs to be picked up again. Liquid modernity is characterized by a shift from aiming for long-lasting, enduring objects to ephemeral, light one, and further reflects the trend from owning goods to having access to them, and from purchasing to hiring (Bauman, 2000; Pomodoro, 2013). Hence, these tendencies embrace all temporary and short-lived, and have led to an increased consumption pace and ongoing social mobility.

With regard to my study's findings, this societal development is further expressed in shoppers' highly object-focused consumption activities. The desire to find bargains, or to purchase brand or designer clothes on a significant discount was expressed the main incentive for shoppers to visit the retail sites. When discussing the empirical findings in the context of liquid modernity, two issues arise. First of all, consumption behavior at pop-up sales indicates a certain connection to hyperconsumption and consumers' request to purchase more and paying less, as well as the desire to buy more within a shorter time. This is coherent to Bauman's (2000) notion that liquidity and transience has led to an obsession with novelty, which only the "[...] plenitude of consumer choice" can satisfy (p. 89).

Furthermore, consumer misbehavior needs to be regarded critically with regard to its social implications, as it is closely connected to what Pomodoro (2013) calls a "[...] life organized around consumption" (p. 342), and object-focused behavior. Both aspects are further discussed within the following paragraphs.

According to Ritzer (2012), the lines between consumption and hyperconsumption are blurred, and it is rather difficult to draw it with precision. The general understanding of this term relates to the tendency to consume more than one needs, more than one intends, and more than one can afford (Baudrillard, 1998). Besides advertising and branding, also consumption sites were found to lead consumers in the direction of hyperconsumption (Ritzer, 2012). With regard to the latter, Fuentes (2012) stresses that CCT scholars found that especially carefully designed 'cathedrals of consumption' "[...] can be deceptive, manipulative and illusionary spaces of consumerism" (p. 12). Even tough pop-up sales have not been presented as controlled or spectacular spaces designed to persuade, or even 'bully' individuals into consuming (Clarke, 1997), the retail spaces do intentionally drive consumption. Especially with regard to the low prices at pop-up sales, in-store hoarding, impulse purchases because the price seems right, and buying more items than intended, have been described as common practices. Thus it is questionable, if pop-up sales promote

hyperconsumption, and along with this, push forward the development of a society where individuals do not define themselves through their productive work, but by what and how they consume (Baudrillard, 1998).

Furthermore, considerations with regard to consumers' object-focused and self-centered behavior during sale events, which has been characterized by individuals' willingness to 'fight' and compete for garment, need to be addressed. Similar to the development of hyperconsumption, consumer misbehavior is often associated with the desire to consume an increasing number of cheap products, and the societal development as illustrated earlier.

According to the literature, consumer misbehavior is highly irrational and emotional (Dholakia, 2000), and has been previously mainly examined in context of Black Friday sales in the United States. As stated by Lennon, Johnson & Lee (2011), some forms of consumer misbehavior harm the consumer (e.g. compulsive buying), whereat other types harm other consumers (e.g. fighting over merchandise) or the retailer (e.g. vandalism). The first two types of misbehavior have been found at pop-up sale events. In accordance with my findings, researchers suggest that sales promotions that are limited in time play a vital role in evoking this sometimes almost aggressive behavior (Anderson & Bushman, 2002), especially in the marketplace (Fullerton & Punj, 2004). Thus, consumer misbehavior can be regarded as consequence of marketing activities that aim to promote extensive consumption (Fullerton & Punj, 2004), while simultaneously persuading scarcity, perishability and fluid retail structures. Without any doubt, such consumption behavior is ethically not justifiable.

Both aspects, hyperconsumption and excessive consumption behavior, are related to the postmodern society, and consumers' constant wish to experience more, to buy more and to pay less. As a result, our contemporary society is shaped by consumerism, pace, and transience and "[...] is guided by seduction, ever rising desires and volatile wishes" (Bauman, 2000, p. 76).

Therefore, it is argued that pop-up sale events are not only a result of this societal development and an example for liquid retail, in accordance with Pomodoro (2013), temporary retail environments produce "[...] an attachment to the quick turnover of anything, to the continuous desire to have new objects to be admired and consumed momentarily" (p. 341).

However, this progress should be regarded critically with regard to the consequences for the society as a whole, and with regard to social and environmental sustainability, and likewise to the outcomes for individuals, including ethical, health and financial consequences.

6.4   Limitations and Future Research Opportunities

Looking back at the whole process of writing this thesis, I am aware that improvements with regard to the methodological choices, but also with regard to the study design as a whole could have potentially impacted the study's outcome.

To begin with, my sample for the sites of observations could be criticized. All retail sites under study focused on vending fashion merchandise, whereat it could have been interesting to include other retail branches, as well. For instance, also retailers that market jewelry, ceramics or home accessories organize pop-up sales. Such products are naturally more sensitive and more delicate than apparel or shoes. Thus, it would be valuable for future research to explore how such pop-up sales are organized and how consumers behave within these settings.

Similar to the sites of observation, also my interview participants were based on an availability sample. One might argue that some of my ethnographic interviews are too short. However, I intentionally accepted this condition, as I found it more valuable to interview 'real' pop-up customers and to recruit them directly in the field, instead of looking for participants within my personal network. On the one hand, I believe that one had to be present at the actual setting, in order to provide experience near information, to describe the specific retail environments, and to reproduce and reflect personal experiences. On the other hand, I am certain that there is a difference between shoppers who simply claim that they enjoy buying 'fashion on sale', as many people in my private network would do, and those who actually look for sale events in their area and intentionally visit them. Therefore, even though my interviews lack in terms of their length, I found the information participants were willing to share very valuable. Nevertheless, I am aware that a larger sample, but also different methods such as an additional group discussion with pop-up sale consumers for example, could have overcome this weakness.

Furthermore, within the analysis it was argued that shoppers experience significant differences between the temporary stores and the retailer's conventional retail sites. Thus, I did not conduct a deep comparison between the retail spaces at temporary sale events and each brand's parent house or long-term store. But it would be of interest to conduct such a comparison or case study about one specific retailer or brand, and to focus on how consumer practices and experiences may differ or correspond in different spaces, operated and controlled by the same retailer.

Also, some of the detected topics such as sport shopping or in-store hoarding could provide an impulse for a broader discussion within the field of Consumer Culture Theory.

Lastly, future research should generally further contribute to the cultural investigation of liquid retail, as to date, hybrid and flexible retail spaces have received rather scant attention in cultural consumption research.

As these considerations show, limitations are inevitable in research projects. Since I did not intend to provide an exhaustive study, which includes all possible aspects that can be associated with my chosen topic, future research is seen as essential.

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APPENDIX

Interview Guide with Broad Topics and Sample Questions

Topic 1   Exclusivity & Community

How did you find out about this pop-up event?

Did you find it by accident or on purpose?

What made you interested in going here?

Where do you search for sale events? Where do you find them?

What makes this store special or different compared to other stores?

Topic 2   Store Location

Where is the pop-up store located?

How long it take you to come here?

Did it you find it immediately?

What do you think about this place/area and why?

Do you come here ocassionally?

Is that a typical area for fashion stores?

Topic 3   Intentions for Visiting

Why do you go here?

In what kind of merchandise are you (most) interested?

What do you think about the brand? What do you like about this brand?

Did you buy this brand before?

What is your opinion about the products / the brand?

What do you think about the prices?

How important are the prices for you?

What kind of products do you find at the pop-up store?

What kind of merchandise do you look for?

Do you plan your purchases before you visit the store?

Topic 4   Store Organization, Layout & Design

Can you describe the retail space at the temporary store?

How is the store organized?

How would you describe the in-store design?

Can you tell me something about the retail theme?

How are the products displayed/presented?

What is your opinion about this product presentation?

How would you describe the atmospheres in the store?

Which elements (music, light, design) create this atmosphere?

How does this store differ from regular retail sites?

Did you visit the conventional store of this label? What is the difference?

Did you pay attention to how the store looks?

How important is a store's appearance?

What is your opinion about this design/appearance?

Topic 5   Consumption Behavior

What do you most likely do when you enter a pop-up store?

Where do you go/look first?

In which area/part of the store do you most likely spend most of the time?

What do you do when you find something you like?

What do other shoppers do around you?

Do you try on the clothes?

What is your opinion about the fitting rooms?

What do you think about having many other shoppers around?

Topic 6   Previous Experience

Can you tell me about a previous visit of a temporary sale event?

What was the best store you visited / what was the worst, and why?

Do you remember the last thing you bought at a different pop-up store?

For what reason did you go there last time?